

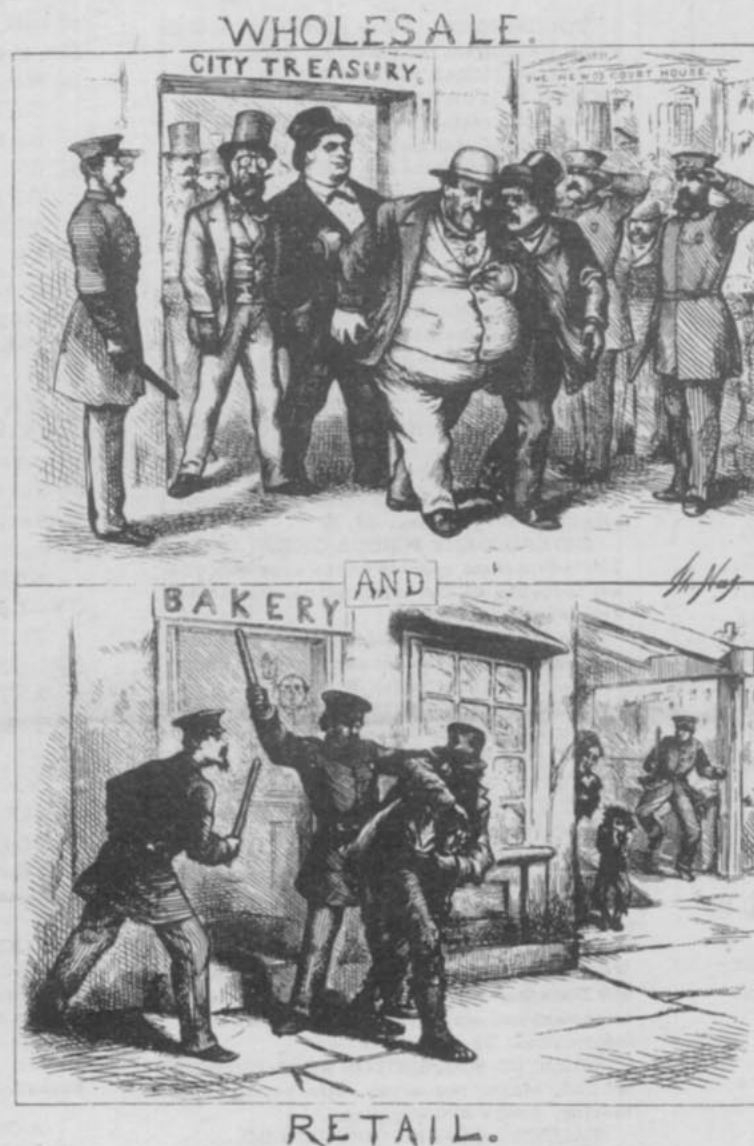
DC GAZETTE

VOL VII NR 9

OCTOBER 1976

WHO OWNS YOUR HOSPITAL?

Citizens' Guide to Zoning



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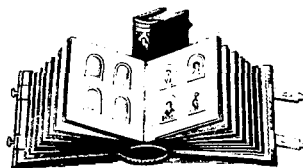
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by Jane Voss



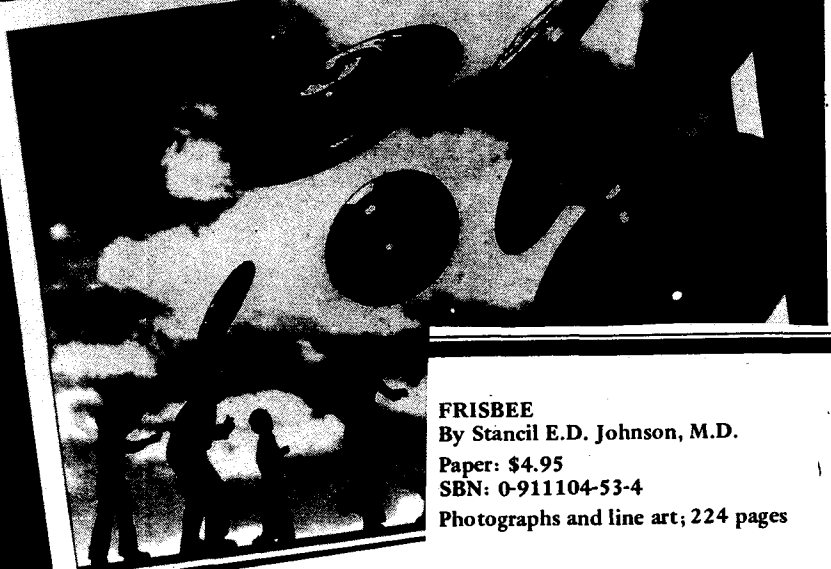
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DC DIARY

THE NEW SOUTH IS HERE ALREADY

The Height of the Crisis Season

THE CASE OF THE MISSING \$157 MILLION

IN this town, where the political, social and journalistic elite are accustomed to adjusting their enthusiasms from administration to administration with the ease of an Encyclopedia salesman shifting his action from McLean to Deanwood, there has been a sudden wave of interest in matters southern. The Washingtonian Magazine recently devoted numerous pages to the "southernization of Washington," the big dailies have sent their soberside staffers down to discover what's been happening since Appomattox and rich Arabs have momentarily lost their glitter as the power-conscious turn their attention to grits, fundamentalism and the "tremendous progress that Atlanta has made."

For Washingtonians of the federal compound, staying home is broadening. In less than two decades they have been able to partake of Boston expansiveness, Texan expansionism, Californian capriciousness, Michigander mediocrity and now, praised be to God, the New South.

The latest acculturation activity betrays its participants' distance from the city's past and its current major culture (everywhere except in the media that it is). For the south in DC is nothing new. This city started in the south and remains, for those other than the federal nomads, a place heavily influenced by southern culture.

It is perhaps archaic to mention that Washington was considered a hotbed of sedition during the Civil War, so come with us now through the pages of history to a mere decade ago, when a prominent concern of the local press was -- yes, excessive southern influence in both national and local politics. Taking advantage of seniority and the filibuster, the south had power in Congress far beyond what its constituency deserved.

It meant more than the successful delay of civil rights legislation. Among the southern prerogatives of the day were control of numerous committees, first serving at the pork barrel and setting the legislative style of the nation. It is no accident that the south is where we must go to leave this planet, that Mendel River's old district is probably the best defended piece of American soil or that the public works cornucopia has flowed on such a southerly course. Eastland, Ervin, Thurmond, Long, Sparkman, Hill, Judge Smith, Byrd, Talmadge, Smathers and, for the District, Mr. McMillan, are just a few of the names that mattered. To be sure, the last ten years has seen a partial eclipse of extraordinary southern political power in Washington but ten years is not much -- one long administration and a tad more, not sufficient for a hardy sweeping historical generalization. It would be more accurate to state simply that, after a short rest, the political south is going up Pennsylvania Avenue sixteen blocks -- not surprising since that is where the power has drifted as well.

Then there is the city itself -- the nontransient city so different from the federal compound with which it is frequently confused. Ask a DC black who grew up here in the forties and fifties whether Washington was a southern town. Ask those who filed suit to desegregate facilities here in the fifties. Ask someone who sat in at a restaurant or picketed Glen Echo in the late fifties.

The public schools of DC were forcibly desegregated by the Supreme Court at the same time as it acted against the other schools of the south. The end of segregation came earlier and generally with more tranquility than elsewhere in the south, but it was generationally equivalent, part of the same movement, part of the same time.

Perhaps the reason it has been forgotten is that it happened with comparative

speed and ease. The whites chose to leave rather than resist and southern blacks, attracted no doubt in part by the signs of progress here, moved in by the tens of thousands to replace them. An old southern white city became a new southern black city in a remarkably short time. It is one of the extraordinary urban migrations of American history but one that has been less noted than it would have been if it had happened when the journalists had found a name for it; if it had occurred later, with more violence and with less success. In truth DC can lay claim to being the first city of the New South; it will never be credited, however, because it did it too soon and too well.

Although Washington is far less a southern city than it once was -- so, of course is Atlanta or Birmingham -- its southern roots are still visible to those

who look beyond the federal enclave. Many of the city's political leaders are transplants from the deep south. Sterling Tucker is one of the few northerners in power here. The business elite is heavily homegrown. Black society, less trendy than its white counterpart, is still controlled by old Washington. And it is possible that part of the problem a succession of short-lived northern school superintendents have had in recent years stemmed from their failure to understand that while southern tradition and values might not be explicit here, they were still powerful.

The major source of new population for this city during the recent era of change from a white to a black city was the south. And this is not just a recent phenomenon. Throughout its history Washington has represented a new south to many southern blacks:

(Please turn to page 17)

the Wholly Bagel Coffeehouse

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PRESENTS:

Toward A Jewish Response To The Economic Crisis

- Oct. 17: "What Should Be the Role of the D.C. Government Josephine Butler, *At-large Council candidate, Statehood Party*
Speaker representing the Jewish community (to be announced)
- Oct. 31: Housing and Land Speculation Frank Smith, *Adams-Morgan Organization*
- Nov. 7: Housing and Land Speculation David Clarke, *Ward 1 Council member sponsor of anti-speculation bill*
- Nov. 21: Restructuring Work Mark Looney, *Strongforce*
- Dec. 5: The Potential of a Coop Bank Speaker from the *Cooperative League of the U.S.A.* (to be announced)
- Dec. 19: Restructuring Work Randy Barber, *People's Business Commission*
Speaker from the *Institute for Local Self-Reliance* (to be announced)
- Jan. 2: Hispanic-Jewish Relations (Speaker to be announced)
- Jan. 16: Black-Jewish Relations (Speaker to be announced)
- Jan. 30: National Food Issues Speaker from the *Interreligious Taskforce on U.S. Food Policy* (to be announced)
- Feb. 13: Alternatives in General Food Distribution Speaker from *Stone Soup* (to be announced)
- Feb. 27: Alternatives in Jewish Food Distribution Speaker from *Kosher Kitchen* (to be announced)
- March 13: Food Day, Past Achievements and Current Issues Speaker from the *Center for Science in the Public Interest* (to be announced)

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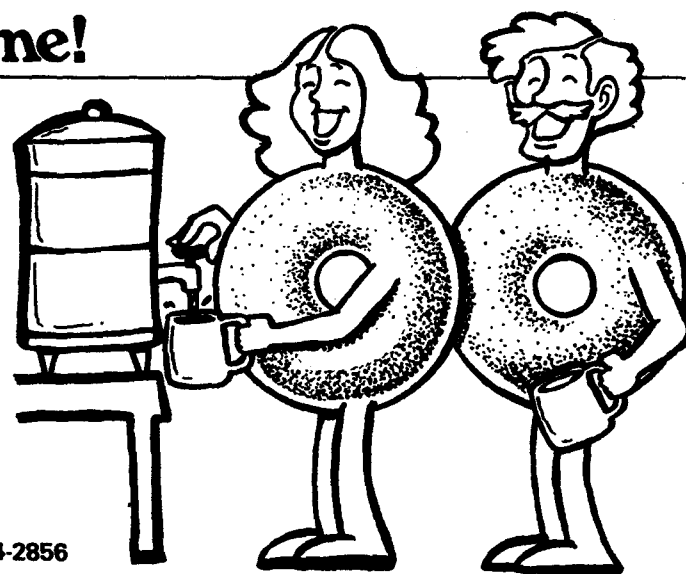
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WHO OWNS YOUR HOSPITAL

"As hospitals develop bigger and bigger mortgages, bankers have more to say... Hospitals will have to cut the cloth to fit the economic pattern. Some perfectly wonderful programs will go down the tubes. The quality of health care will suffer."

-- Joseph Sloss, former president of Mt. Zion Hospital in San Francisco

"We have not gone in and told the hospital [St. Luke's] what to do. We have met on a regular basis with [the controller]. All we've done is point out cash flow. We don't care what they do as long as they're able to meet their obligations."

-- Ralph Peters, Wells Fargo bank officer

DID Wells Fargo bank tell San Francisco's St. Luke's Hospital to close its clinic? Might the Bank of America or some other bank close the out-patient clinic of the hospital in your area? For all practical purposes, yes.

Banks wield enormous power over hospitals because the hospitals are heavily in debt. Charitable donations are no longer large enough to pay for hospital construction or even purchase expensive equipment. So hospitals have turned to the banks and insurance companies for loans.

The consequence of bankers controlling social services has been shown most dramatically in the fiscal crisis of New York City. In pursuit of bank profits -- prompt repayment of loans with interest -- banks which have lent money to New York are insisting on the closing of schools, hospitals, fire stations and libraries. The same kind of cutbacks, though not yet so apparent, are affecting private hospitals around the country.

As hospitals are squeezed for money, the bankers and board of trustees put economic considerations before health care needs. The bankers demand repayment of loans, regardless of consequences; and in order to do this, the trustees cut the less profitable services regardless of the need.

From this viewpoint, surgery rooms and X-ray departments are valuable since they produce money. Out-patient clinics are not valuable since they lose money. Free and party-pay clinics for the poor are the worst of all from the bankers' point of view.

The banks have three kinds of economic hold over the hospitals: 1) the multi-million dollar construction loan -- the hospital's biggest obligation to the bank and the step that gets the hospital into hot water; 2) the short-term loan required by a shortage of money caused by over-expansion and empty beds; and 3) the banks leasing of major equipment to the hospital.

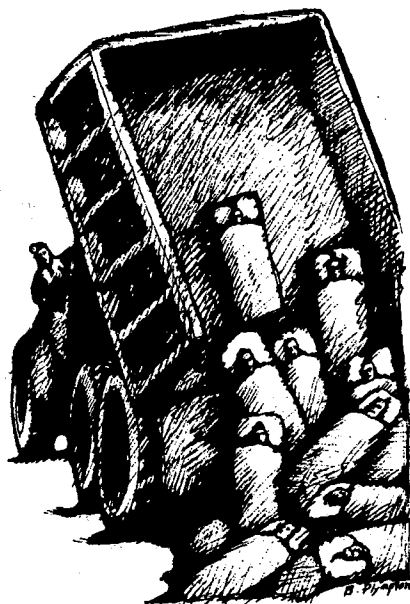
In these transactions, the banks impose conditions: the hospital can't take out another loan without the bank's okay; it can't purchase or lease expensive equipment without bank review, etc.

The final straw in hospital dependence on banks is the "locking in" of a hospital to one bank. Whereas years ago a hospital might have accounts and loans with several banks, today, in San Francisco for example, most hospitals have one primary bank. One trustee at San Francisco's Mt. Zion Hospital declared bluntly, "We're locked into Wells Fargo," and the administrator of St. Luke's Hospital said, "Wells Fargo is the bank of St. Luke's."

Bank of America required this kind of locking in as part of its recent major construction loan to St. Mary's, another San Francisco hospital which is \$24 million in debt to the bank.

Often the economic relationship between the bank and the hospital is personified and solidified by a banker who sits on the hospital board of trustees. These

(This article is excerpted from Vital Signs, the monthly of Health PAC West, 558 Capp Street, San Francisco, CA 94110.)



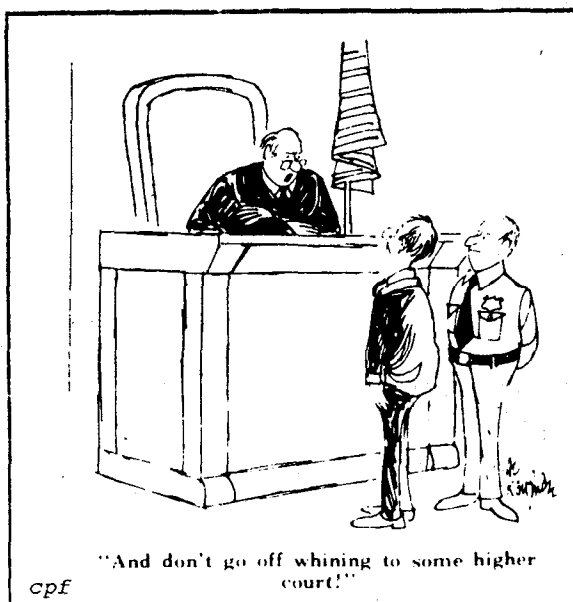
people may help to bring about the locking in of the hospital to their bank. But once the loans are made, the banks' power comes less from whoever is on the board, and more from its economic leverage.

In San Francisco, St. Luke's Hospital is indebted to Wells Fargo for an \$8.7 million construction loan for an unneeded doctors' office building. As a result, the hospital is so short on cash that it has been borrowing more money on a short term basis. The St. Luke's outpatient clinic is used primarily by working poor people in the predominantly Latin community of San Francisco's Mission district who are without insurance and unable to pay for private doctors. The clinic is subsidized by the hospital at the rate of about \$400,000 a year.

Wells Fargo and the hospital's trustees and administration, looking for a way to stop this "drain" on the hospital, planned to close the clinic. However, faced with community opposition to their plan, they cut the clinic adrift instead, making it a separate corporation. It is unlikely that the clinic will be able to survive in this way.

San Francisco's Mt. Zion Hospital, \$5 million in debt to Wells Fargo, is also cutting back on services, and as board member Peter Arnstein said, "Free and below cost clinic care will be the first to go."

When asked if the bank suggested closing the outpatient department, Arnstein explained: "The banks don't need to make direct suggestions. To get permanent financing hospitals need to show cash flow, and to show cash flow they need to cut free and part pay services and keep occupancy up. So they don't tell us what to do, but we know what to do if we want to get financing."



"And don't go off whining to some higher court!"

cpf

ONE OF THE fascinating aspects -- and perhaps more significant than it might appear -- of Jimmy Carter's rise was the conversion of Dr. Hunter Thompson (followed by that of his editor Mr. Wenner) to the Georgia governor. The story was told in a 20,000-word piece in Rolling Stone. It is hard to give a precis of Dr. Thompson's line of reasoning, but suffice it to say that a speech Carter gave on Law Day several years ago created a good deal of Thompson's enthusiasm. Thompson let us know how he felt about the speech but the only passage he quoted in full is one in which Carter says he "learned to appreciate the dynamism of social change" from "a friend of mine, a poet named Bob Dylan. . ."

Well, according to Michael Drosnin and Ron Rosenbaum writing in More (it's in new hands and has dropped the brackets) Steve Brill, whose early attack on Carter in Harper's should have given us all adequate warning, left out one anecdote that he later recalled in an interview: "I was flying back to Atlanta with Carter [two years after Thompson's conversion] and I asked Carter to name his favorite Dylan song. He smiled and smiled and said 'I hate to offend Bob by naming just one.'" Asked to name a few, Carter smiled some more and said 'Roselyn and I listen to him all the time, but the lyrics and the titles blur.'" Pressed to name his favorite album, he demurred. Finally, Carter stopped smiling and said, "Why don't we talk about something else?"

Armed with this information and the thought that Carter might have invited Thompson to the governor's mansion and written the Law Day speech specifically to sell Thompson and thus help to tow along the youth vote, Drosnin and Rosenbaum approached Thompson. Thompson backed off somewhat, saying that all the candidates including Carter put on "disgusting ... sickening" performances in the primaries. They then asked him: did it ever occur to him that Carter "might have started spouting Dylan at the Law Day speech specifically to seduce Hunter Thompson?"

Said Thompson: "Jesus. That never occurred to me. To believe that, you'd have to believe the guy was so heavy, so calculating, think that far ahead, Jesus, you'd have to keep your eye on him 24 hours a day. I can't believe that. It would be too . . . ominous."

PRIVATE POWER COMPANIES charge their residential customers 60 percent more for electricity than publicly owned utilities do, according to a new book released by the Environmental Action Foundation.

The book, Taking Charge: A New Look at Public Power (\$2.50 from EAF, Suite 724, 1346 Conn. Ave, NW, DC 20036), lists the accomplishments of the nation's 3000 municipally-owned utilities and rural electric cooperatives in such areas as energy conservation, solar energy development, and rate structure reform.

According to the report, public power systems have offered "excellent electric service at substantially lower rates than neighboring privately owned utilities" since the first municipal utility was established in the late 1800s. Today municipalities and cooperatives provide electricity to almost one in four Americans, while investor-owned utilities serve the rest.

The group pointed to the 50 percent increase in electric rates since 1973 and the power companies' foot-dragging on pollution control measures as the major reasons for increasing citizen interest in public ownership of utilities. The environmentalists cited 16 states where citizens are working to establish publicly owned utilities in their communities.

A BALTIMORE massage parlor, forced to close down because of a new zoning restriction, has changed its name and opened as a sperm bank. What was once the "Cat's Meow" is now being operated as "Future Propagations Inc." Baltimore officials say they will investigate.

DC GAZETTE

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Vincent Reed's First Year

ANNE CHASE

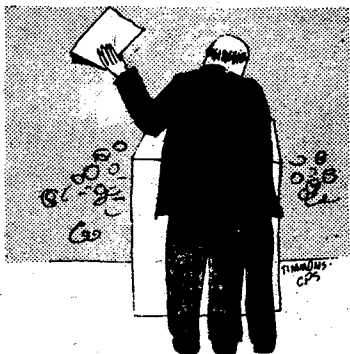
A HEADLINE that the Washington Post might have run the second week in September, but didn't, reads, "D.C. Schools Open Without Confusion, Teacher Transfers At Minimum." For the first time in recent memory, the DC public school system has solved its twin staffing problems, equalization and comparability before the opening of school. In the past, equalization, mandated by the court decision in *Hobson v. Hansen*, and comparability, required by participation in the Title I program, resulted in wholesale transfers of teachers, mass confusion and months of acrimonious discussion of who was to blame. This year, the administration has been able to figure out a means of complying without taking such drastic measures as removing the only first grade teacher in a building and shipping him/her across town to check attendance records.

The DC public school system now knows how many employees it has, what each of those employees is paid, and when a teaching position opens up, they now know if they have the money to fill it. Although this may seem like the most elemental book-keeping, in 1975 the school board had to make up a \$5.8 million deficit, caused by hiring too many teachers, by cutting out maintenance and supplies entirely from April until June.

Vincent Reed has been in the superintendent's job for eleven months and he has accomplished a vast amount. Board members and administrative staff have little but praise for him. Although recent news accounts have focused on low pupil scores on standardized tests, such as the College Boards, the school system has come a long way from two years ago. In the words of one board member, "I can't think of one single problem that's getting worse. Some things aren't getting any better, but nothing's getting worse." Ed Winner, deputy superintendent for management, agreed. "Right now, we're dependent on people's good will to bear with us. We've taken care of a lot of problems, and the people in the field are being very patient. People are willing to wait for you to get straightened out, if they can see some progress."

The superintendent is also beginning to explore ways of improving instruction, in line with the board's mandate of emphasis on math and reading. The new program is called Competency Based Curriculum. This has prompted some derision among long-time observers of the school system. "Ask them what they had before—incompetency based curriculum?" suggested one wag. According to Dr. James Guines, the deputy superintendent for instruction, who has been responsible for developing the program, Competency Based Curriculum means deciding exactly what it is you are going to teach.

What should a student be able to do when she/he leaves fifth grade, or passes a course in high school biology? The school system has assembled a curriculum advisory committee to draw up objectives for every course in the schools. This will eventually mean that you will be able to go into any fifth grade class in the city and they all should be learning the same things. In coming months they will be assembling a "blue ribbon" panel of people drawn from local



"Our company firmly believes that nuclear power plant dangers are non-existent."

colleges, local businesses, government, etc., to decide what the requirements for a diploma should be. Theoretically, this policy will do away with grade inflation, social promotion and the production of virtual illiterates. The program will begin to be put into action in prototype schools in each of the six regions of the city sometime this fall. Dr. Guines explained, "We have been unable to hold teachers accountable for teaching kids, because we have not spelled out what the children are supposed to learn. This has great implications for teacher evaluation. We are going to bring structured control to the teaching and learning processes."

Under decentralization, the administration largely dismantled the system of subject departments, so teachers who needed

assistance in planning a curriculum have been unable to get it. Also there has been no centralized method of teacher evaluation for several years. Principals are now responsible for evaluating the teachers under their supervision, a policy initiated by Reed.

Both board members and parents express concern over the need to upgrade the teaching staff. Board member Hilda Mason explained, "Under competency based curriculum the teachers make sure that the children have learned what they're teaching. I would like CBC to include making teachers know what they're teaching. I would wish that every person who teaches in the school system take an examination. I'm not sure that some teachers are qualified to teach. I'm

(Please turn to page 17)

GAMES THE SYSTEM PLAYS

(As parents and teachers face a new school year, we thought they might enjoy this thought-provoking article reprinted from *Coalition*, the monthly publication of the Boston City-Wide Educational Coalition, Inc. CWEC is a citizen's organization seeking to improve the public schools in Boston. It seemed to us to describe the operation of more than one bureaucracy with which citizens must grapple.)

TACTIC 1: REFUSE TO GIVE OUT THE INFORMATION.

This tactic is a basic tool for any bureaucrat. By refusing to give you the facts, the bureaucrat hopes that you will go away.

In order to reform the system or bring about a change, you and your council need the facts. If you have the facts, the system is forced to deal with you more openly, and on a more equal footing. Democracy depends on people having the facts.

The refusal to give out the information may sound like this:

- We don't have that information.
- I'm sorry but she (he) is not in today, is on vacation, is out sick, has not authorized me to give out that information.
- Our computer broke down.
- It is confidential information for the school department.
- If we release that information, we will be violating the privacy of students (parents).
- We can only give out a summary. (They decide what is included and excluded.)
- I'm sorry but we don't think you need that information.

Whenever you hear any of these statements, be on guard. Ask for a complete explanation of why the information cannot be given. Ask when it will be available. Ask who it is available to. Then check with several other sources to find out if the information you have been given (or the excuses) is correct.

If information is being withheld from you, use this as an issue to organize around. Parents can bring a lot of pressure on someone who is withholding information to which they have a right.

TACTIC 2: GIVE THEM A RED HERRING TO EAT.

Whenever you are confronting the system, watch out for Red Herrings. When a bureaucrat tries to get the subject changed from what you are concerned about to what he (she) wants you to focus on, he is trying to give you a Red Herring. You can tell a Red Herring because it does not smell right. The bureaucrat may sound like this:

- Why are you interested in that issue; it's not very important. Why don't you start working on...
- Your issue is beside the point; it is extremist; you have not done the research; that point is not practical; etc.

TACTIC 3: GIVE THE APPEARANCE OF ACTION WITHOUT DOING ANYTHING.

When faced with an obvious need for change, bureaucrats may try to give the appearance of action without actually doing anything.

This tactic may sound like:

- We have decided to appoint a committee to study the problem.
- We would like to set up a commission to handle the problem and want members of your group to volunteer assistance because we do not have money for staff.
- We would like several members of your organization to join an advisory committee for this problem to help us work out solutions.

- We plan to issue a policy statement of that problem next week so that everyone will know what to do in the future.

Don't accept these excuses. Set a reasonable amount of time for some real action, and then tell everyone that you expect action by that date. Don't join into any "study committees" or "advisory groups" which have no real power to do anything.

TACTIC 4: MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR PEOPLE TO BE INVOLVED.

A simple and common technique for the bureaucracy to maintain its control is to set things up so that parents cannot be involved. Some common examples are:

- scheduling meetings during times when working parents cannot attend;
- holding meetings in places which are difficult to reach or where parents do not feel safe;
- use language and terms which are difficult to understand, intimidating to parents, highly technical, etc.;
- give out guidelines or instructions which are too complicated to understand, or so long and detailed that parents become frustrated in reading through them;
- refuse to provide daycare for parents, or interpreters, transportation, etc.

A key element in these tactics is to make it appear that the problem comes from the parents, not from the system. The bureaucracy sets up an "opportunity" to participate, and then points out that parents are "apathetic." When many parents experience the same problem (like meeting time, or need for baby sitting, or interpreters), then you have to put the pressure on the system to find the solution. Make them responsible.

TACTIC 5: DIVIDE AND CONQUER.

Divide and conquer is an old and well established technique. The divisions can be neighborhood against neighborhood, black against white, school against school. Two of the more sophisticated approaches to "divide and conquer" are:

- Move a centralized problem to a decentralized problem. Decentralization is supposed to bring authority and responsibility closer to the people, and the problem. However, it also can force people to fight many small battles all over the city around an issue which really is city-wide. Small groups working in isolation of each other are not as powerful as a large group which can maximize its pressure on one place.

- Provide enough resources to cover only part of the problem. This technique can be as simple as only preparing a few copies of an important document (so that some people have the information and others do not), to as complex as encouraging many people to apply for money when there is only enough for a few programs or groups.

The divide and conquer tactic is very difficult to stop once it gets started. Often the tactic uses existing tensions and divisions within the group.

SOME GENERAL SUGGESTIONS AND GUIDELINES.

Before your organization confronts any bureaucracy, you should try to determine what kinds of tactics are likely to be used. As soon as a tactic has become apparent, LABEL IT. When you name the tactic publicly, it loses some of its power. When you, members of the councils, and others recognize the tactic, you can counter it with a minimum of wasted effort.

Never allow your leaders to confront the bureaucracy as individuals. A group can demand changes much more effectively and it prevents all kinds of retaliation against an individual. The group also can protect the leader from being labeled as a "trouble maker" or as someone who just has a personal hang up.

(From the DC Citizens for Better Education newsletter, Bulletin Board)

DEEP TROUBLE

DAN FOOTE

HARRY Reems is in deep trouble.

Four years ago he worked one day in the movie "Deep Throat." He signed a standard contract in which he waived any future rights over the film's editing, promotion or distribution. He got \$100 in pay.

Last March, a federal court in Memphis, Tennessee, convicted Reems of participating in a "national conspiracy to transport interstate obscene materials," even though his contract expressly denied him any say over the final content of the film or where it would show. Reems says he's the first actor ever prosecuted in a federal court for his work. Reem's lawyers say the conviction will effectively implement national censorship of movies and suppress creative thought, since the conviction was based on wide-reaching "conspiracy" laws and the feelings of Memphis citizens about the film.

"It's setting a precedent where actors are now liable for where the films shows," Reems says. "Suddenly we're working with the smallest common denominator, as far as Memphis, Tennessee, goes. They (films) are going to have to be geared so that they're acceptable in the smallest town. If this thing is upheld, you're going to see a lack of sexual freedom on screen -- be it 'Last Tango in Paris,' or 'Shampoo,' or 'Deep Throat' or whatever.

Reems said his conviction is already affecting filmmakers. "I know about four or five projects -- I'm not talking about porn at all, but about major work with major names -- that have been shelved temporarily, or the scripts are being rewritten, or the products that are in the editing process are being re-edited to take out 'salacious' material."

Reems also said his conviction represents a retroactive application of the law, since he was tried under the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 obscenity criteria of offending "community" standards. Reems contends his brief involvement with the film took place in 1972, when the Court's criteria was that the work must be "without redeeming social significance." Federal prosecutors counter that he was still a part of the "conspiracy" in 1973.

Although federal prosecutor Larry Parish went after "the honchos who made money on the film," Reems said, "He went after me, I think, just for dramatic effect. He knew I had no involvement in the transportation of the film. And unfortunately, with the conspiracy laws, he can pull in anybody who's ever had anything to do with it. He can pull in a popcorn vendor if he wants to."

Reems added he felt Paris picked an actor since "he'd find a more sympathetic jury in proving a man guilty of obscene acts, than say, a woman.

Reems, a New Yorker, is living in California trying to raise the money in "the film community because of the direct implications for them." He said the money, about \$25,000 thus far, has been coming in slowly because political campaigns have dominated the fund-raising field.

Although the support of Steve McQueen, Dustin Hoffman, Shirley MacLaine, Barbra Streisand, Ramsey Clark, Bella Abzug and other luminaries on the committee of the "Harry Reems Legal Defense Fund" has given it an air of "legitimacy," it also has made him look like he's in less-than-desperate straits. "People are assuming that

because Warren Beatty and (Jack) Nicholson and the unions and the guilds and all sorts of big funds and organizations are behind me, that they've made large financial contributions, and that's not so," says Reems.

The nature of "Deep Throat" hasn't been an obstacle in turning the current trickle of funds into the flow he'll need. "Once the points of the case are spelled out to them, everybody is sort of outraged," Reems said. But he conceded, "There's a stigma attached to 'Deep Throat.' There's a stigma attached to 'Harry Reems.'"

(Tax deductible contributions to the Harry Reems Legal Defense Fund can be made payable to "The Bill of Rights Foundation, Inc." and sent to the Fund at Suite 104, 8430 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90069.)

-- NEWTIMES/APS



How One Politician Brings Government Home

by Dick Simpson

The 44th Ward Assembly was first convened in January, 1972. In its four years of existence it has brought participatory democracy of a very practical and pragmatic sort to the strongest machine controlled city in the nation.

The Ward Assembly is an institution which combines the principles of representative and direct democracy. Its voting members are two delegates elected from each of the 61 precincts in the ward and one delegate from every organization with more than 25 members who live in the community. But every resident, regardless of age or citizenship is free to attend the monthly meetings as a non-voting member free to speak to the issues that directly concern them.

Dick Simpson is alderman of Chicago's 44th ward and is an assistant professor of political science at the University of Illinois, Chicago Circle Campus. He is also co-author, with George Beam, of Strategies for Change: How to Make the American Political Dream Work (The Swallow Press, Inc., Chicago, 1976).

The purposes of the assembly as listed in its charter and carried out in practice are four:

- To direct and to advise the Alderman as to how he shall cast his vote in City Council.
- To direct and to advise the Alderman as to what new legislation he shall sponsor in the City Council.
- To establish priorities for pro-

grams to be undertaken by the Alderman for the benefit of the Ward and to take supportive action to reinforce such programs.

- To make possible free and responsible debate on all the issues that affect the welfare of residents of the Ward."

That is to say, by a two-thirds vote of the delegates the Assembly can actually mandate the Alderman's vote in City Council on any issue except issues related to the Bill of Rights.

As Alderman, I personally chair the meetings. Thus, there is direct face-to-face discussion -- I hear constituents concerns and answer for my actions in a way few public officials do. The most exciting thing about the assembly, which is not true of the City Council of Chicago or most legislative bodies, is that opinions are changed by our discussions, study and debate.

The Ward Assembly is important because:

- It is the birthplace of many good, sound pieces of legislation like the anti-redlining ordinance which has now become the national standard.
- It widens the responsibility of government from one public official to several hundred citizens.
- Through the election of delegates several thousand citizens express their concerns and hopes to the Alderman who personally attends all 61 precinct elections every year.

- Every year, several hundred citizens learn the process of government, gain self-confidence in their own ability, throw off their apathy, and learn enlightened self-interest as they come to understand better the problems of others throughout the ward and the city.

The 44th Ward Assembly suggests an important corrective to many of the experiments in neighborhood government throughout the country. Advisory councils and planning boards are fine but the actual power to decide issues is better. And, if we are to be a government, we must be directly related to elected public officials. The beauty of a Ward Assembly is that any public official can do as I have done and voluntarily share his power with citizens. It can also be adopted as the official form of local government by ordinance or referendum.

Currently an ordinance to create Ward Assemblies in all of Chicago's fifty wards is before the Chicago City Council. It is certain to be voted down by Mayor Daley's majority. They fear it like the plague. If citizens had a voice in their own government again, what would happen to the pols? But the idea will not die, and perhaps its time has come. Perhaps now is the time to reinstitute democracy in America.

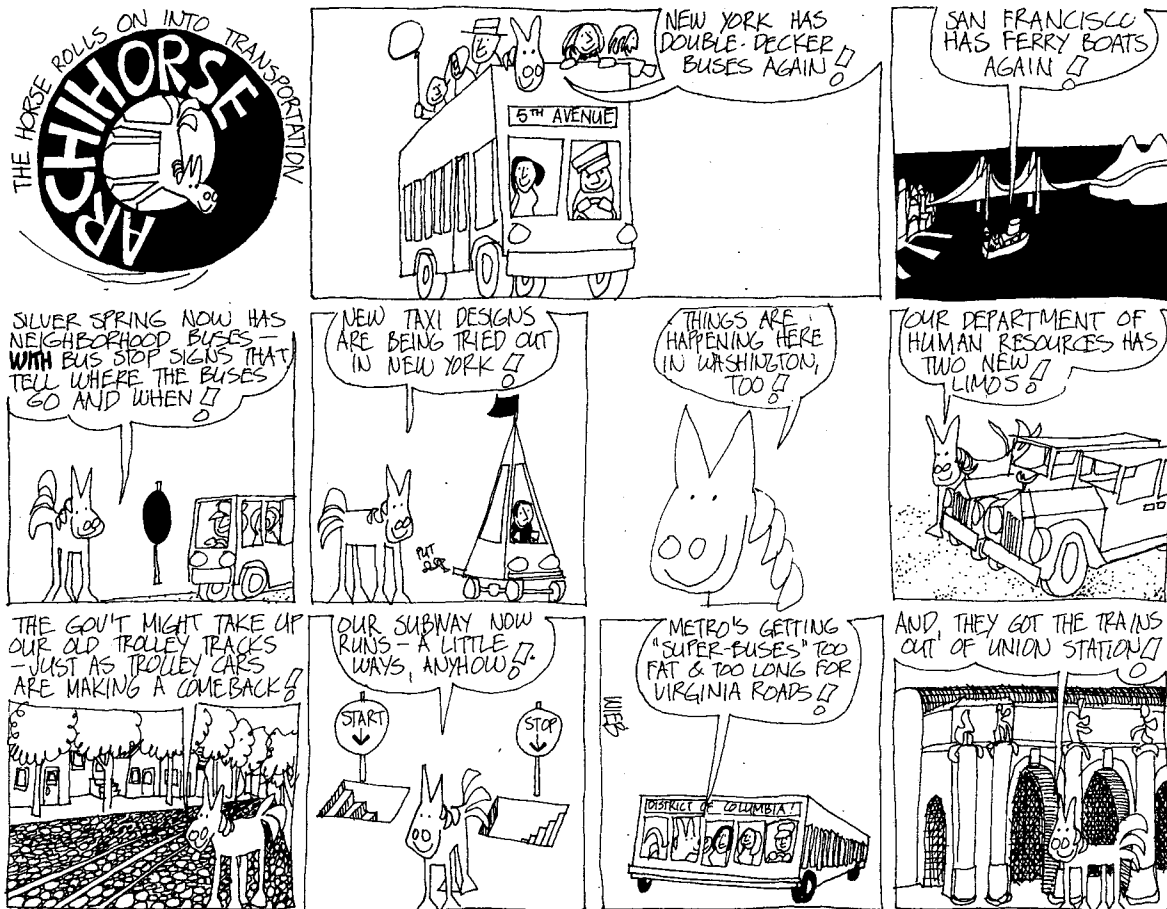
For more information write to:

Alderman Dick Simpson
1045 West Belmont
Chicago, Illinois

This article comes from the Alliance for Neighborhood Government newsletter.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSIT

MARK LOVELACE



NOT all mass transit in Washington has to be in the form of bus or subway - nor is it. Admittedly, other ways of moving people around city and suburb are not as technologically flashy or as expensive to build and operate as a subway, nor do they always receive substantial federal aid. Nevertheless, alternative transit can fill many of the gaps left by present and planned systems. Service can be provided on a door-to-door basis by dial-a-ride - especially important for elderly and handicapped. Not everybody needs to do downtown, so to go shopping in the neighborhood or to get to the nearest recreation facilities, residents could use jitney service. Jitneys could run frequent non-scheduled loops on important streets, offering a choice other than infrequently-run bus routes that are often overly long and winding, connecting two basically unrelated points. Taxis are part of mass transit, too, and service in Washington could be expanded and revised to allow cabs to operate dial-a-ride and jitney service as well as owl shifts on lightly used bus routes.

Jitnies, taxis and dial-a-ride are among the systems classified by the Urban Mass Transportation Administration as "para-transit," defined by the Urban Institute in 1974 as "those forms of intra-urban passenger transportation which are available to the public, are distinct from conventional transit (scheduled bus and rail), and can operate over the highway and street system." Besides Para-transit, (which also includes subscription buses, bikes and car pooling) there is light-rail transit, or the modern streetcar. Light rail does not require as expensive rights-of-way nor as elaborate stations as a subway. Light-rail is much less expensive to build and operate. Although some other cities never gave up their streetcars, light rail has not been conventional transit in DC for more than fifteen years.

Collectively called "alternative transit," none of these systems requires much new, untried technology. Relatively little capital is involved, and construction costs (needed only for light-rail) are a fraction as expensive per mile as heavy rail subways. Instead of equipment, often the needed innovation is in management, regulation, legislation and, in some cases, subsidies.

UMTA has shifted its emphasis away from conventional bus and heavy rail (like Metro). UMTA head Robert E. Patricelli wrote last year, "There is increasing doubt that a single transport system of technology can effectively serve the broad range of travel patterns that prevail in a large city. [The] trend [is] to move away from a uni-modal solution to a system that blends a number of discrete transit elements, each of which is closely tailored to demands and local condition..." Nevertheless, only a small percentage of UMTA capital grants has gone to alternative transit, although various demonstration projects and studies have been sponsored by the agency.

Still, many officials and researchers are turning their attention to alternative transit as freeway construction slows down, bus systems go deeper in the red and lose riders and rapid transit systems in San Francisco and Washington create huge deficits. Here are some of the things they are finding:

DIAL-A-RIDE

Dial-a-ride is the term for shared vehicles which on demand usually provide door-to-door service for passengers with different origins and destinations. Riders phone the dispatcher, who then chooses a vehicle to be sent for the pickup. Dial-a-ride seems to have originally been designed especially for residential areas where buses are scarce and lightly-used, and most systems have appeared in small cities or suburbs. Applications in denser urban areas appear likely and workable, however.

Some dial-a-ride systems are many-to-many, serving all requested origins and destinations. Others are many-to-few, picking up passengers at the door but dropping them off only at selected spots such as subway stations or shopping centers reversing the pattern going back. There are also few-to-few operations.

The most notable success of dial-a-ride experiments in the last few years has been their ability to attract riders in small residential areas. Michael Kemp and Kiran Bhatt of the Urban Institute report, "The patronage levels on most of the existing dial-a-ride systems continue to grow. Where a new dial-a-ride service has replaced a fixed-route scheduled bus service, the decline in ridership was typically ar-

rested and the trend has been reversed." Also, dial-a-ride appears able to draw riders from all occupation and socio-economic groups.

The biggest problem has been the cost of the systems. Publicly-owned dial-a-ride has almost always used buses of various sizes, requiring transit union operators. Fares, usually set fairly low, could never hope to cover operating costs, even if ridership were much higher. The recently discontinued Gaithersburg dial-a-ride service cost Montgomery County \$2.80 per passenger in subsidy in its first year of operation, a prohibitively high figure it was concluded.

Ronald Kirby of the Urban Institute said average costs of bus-based dial-a-ride were \$16-\$18 per bus operating hour. In contrast, taxi-based dial-a-ride costs much less, on the order of \$6-\$8 per vehicle hour, and can be profitable. There are privately run systems that have existed since the 1930s, the most notable operating in Davenport, Iowa, and Madison, Wisconsin. The cab companies are given credit by Kemp and Bhatt for astute, experienced management in turning a profit and continuing to draw more passengers. Also, cab driver wages are generally much lower than those for bus drivers, the 1969 average in Washington being \$2.40 and \$4.16, respectively. These cabs in Davenport and Madison are not allowed to cruise for passengers, going only where the dispatcher directs them.

Kirby, Kemp, and Bhatt conclude that dial-a-ride, especially many-to-many service is best provided by taxi either as a private venture or under a contract between company and locality. Many cities are considering or planning to use dial-a-ride for elderly and handicapped only, equipping a number of vans with ramps or lifts for wheelchairs. In Washington, several volunteer groups provide what amounts to dial-a-ride for elderly and handicapped, but the size of these operations limits the number of people served. Although Metro is obliged to put in elevators for handicapped at each rapid transit station, there are no plans to provide special vehicles for exclusive service for the handicapped and elderly.

Many-to-few service appears to have potential in DC as a feeder service to Metro stations for passengers who can not walk or will not or can not take buses. Such service could be on a subscription basis (the same riders agreeing to use the service each day). Vehicles larger than taxis but smaller than conventional buses can be used for this service, although again WMATA itself has not expressed any interest in providing dial-a-ride to its own widely-spaced and sometimes distant stations.

JITNEYS

Jitneys usually run on a fixed route, in a loop or up and down a particularly busy street. Atlantic City and San Francisco have the only legal jitney service in the United States today. In both cases, vehicles hold about ten people and are individually owned and operated. There are no fixed schedules but service is frequent, with average daytime waiting time in Atlantic City never going over two minutes. The Atlantic City jitneymen's association sets a roster to ensure that there is a minimal amount of service each day during all hours.

There is talk now by planners and communities of bringing back jitneys to a number of cities including Washington, but no actual experiments are going on now anywhere in the country. The Atlantic City and San Francisco operations are remnants of



Atlantic City jitney

the jitney heyday of around 1915 when a city like Seattle had over 500 jitneys carrying 49,000 passengers a day. Jitneys were almost all regulated out of existence before 1920 by the lobbying pressure of the streetcar companies. Now, says Ronald Kirby, the transit companies are still generally against the revival of jitneys, but he notes, that some of the opposition to the similar use of taxis on fixed routes has slackened recently.

According to Kirby, Metro is dead-set against the idea of any jitney or fixed-route taxi service, reinforcing the authority's reputation as the innovative "black sheep of the transit industry." Nevertheless, jitney service in Washington has been mentioned as a possibility more than once. The Mayor's Taxicab Service Task Force in 1974 suggested taxi jitneys running on routes that can not support conventional bus service or are without Sunday or owl service. The DC Department of Transportation is considering jitney routes in Far Northeast and Far Southeast, but few details are available.

Ironically, Metro runs the closest approximation of jitney service in the city. Its Downtowner route uses small buses on a route from lower Connecticut Avenue south. But service is scheduled, unlike true jitneys. The market being tapped is downtown shoppers, shuttling them around a fairly small area. The Downtowner has run successfully for several years, but its ridership according to Metro has been "drastically reduced," since the first leg of the subway opened last March.

Two other jitney-like loops run through Takoma-East Silver Spring (TESS), these being provided by Montgomery County. A population of 46,000 in 4.5 square miles is served, the region including two senior citizens apartments, two colleges, two libraries, two public swimming pools, the Sil-

ver Spring Metrobus terminal, and several neighborhood shopping areas. The 19-seat fixed schedule buses can travel on residential streets, "providing better penetration of neighborhoods than Metrobus," according to Edward A. Daniel, director of the county office of transportation planning. TESS is seen as a success, having drawn 60 percent more passengers in its first year than expected, thereby reducing the county's subsidy of each rider to 43 cents, less than the Metrobus per-rider subsidy.

Bob Pickett of the WMATA planning office agrees that smaller buses appear able to attract more riders on some routes than conventional buses. Yet, Metro itself is not currently planning to start neighborhood loops in Washington like the popular service in Montgomery County. The ability of smaller vehicles, as seen in dial-a-ride as well as the limited jitney applications, to "penetrate neighborhoods" and gain more riders should be exploited by Metro, especially to get riders to the subway stations. Operating on small loop routes, such vehicles could also serve neighborhood needs such as getting to the supermarket and other area facilities, transit needs too often forgotten by conventional transit that is oriented more to getting people downtown.

(Next month: Taxis and trollies)



Dial-a-Ride in Davenport

SHARED taxicab service has been offered in Davenport for at least forty years. The Royal Cab Company (then the largest and now the only cab company in the city) was acquired in 1967 by its present owner, Robert Cherry. Since that time this dynamic entrepreneur has managed to expand the operations of the company very significantly and is today providing an extremely successful and financially self-sufficient dial-a-ride service.

By early 1973 the company had 23 vehicles (standard 7-seat Checker cabs) providing door-to-door service on a 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week basis. In direct competition with a publicly subsidized bus transit system, Royal Cab has been able to attract some 1,250 to 1,600 riders per weekday in spite of relatively high fares which average roughly \$1.00 per passenger. The Royal Cab Company carries roughly two-thirds as many people in total as the bus company, even though the flat bus fare is only 35 cents.

The vehicle productivity is between 4 and 5 passengers per vehicle-hour of operation, implying revenues of about \$4.00 to \$5.00 per vehicle-hour. We estimate the total costs to be slightly less than this. Solid managerial know-how, low overhead, and efficient utilization of labor and equipment, along with relatively low driver wages, are primarily responsible for the low cost figures.

Passengers request service by telephone, or in person at the downtown waiting room. Empty cabs are not allowed to cruise: they wait for deployment by the dispatcher. The system is based on manual dispatching employing a total of three dispatchers.

The astute managerial and administrative skills of the owner are reflected in a variety of decisions and policies. For example, the cab charges passengers 10 cents per minute after waiting for three minutes outside their origin address, in order to reduce the wait time for other riders and to decrease the taxi idle time. On the other hand, there are methods of providing incentives for drivers and good service to customers: for example, after the first three bags of groceries, passengers are charged 25 cents for each additional package, and this fee goes to the driver. The drivers are also compensated for waiting for calls at various locations.

Royal Cab also provides a number of other services which are compatible with the operations of a cab company with vehicles on the road 24 hours a day. Thus, the company is the local Western Union agent, and cabs deliver telegrams; during nine months of the year, cabs also service barges on the Mississippi with supplies at all times of day and night; Royal Cab is the local agent for the Skycab air-taxicab freight service; and many local people call the company in preference to calling an ambulance when emergency service is needed.

The primary service area is somewhat larger than that of the bus-based dial-a-ride operations. The primary service area has a population (1970) of 98,500 in an area of 20.0 square miles, although Royal Cab will actually accept requests from anywhere in the home county. The fare system is on a zone basis, with the fare calculated per call regardless of the number of passengers wishing to travel between the same origin and destination. Passengers may obtain exclusive service by paying a \$1.00 premium over the usual fare for the shared cab.

(From *Paratransit: Neglected Option for Urban Mobility*, \$4.95 from Urban Institute, 2100 M Street, NW, DC 20037.)

Neighborhood Rape

"Like the common street rapist who so often gets off scotfree, institutional rapists deny all responsibility. . . they no infrequently end of blaming the victims -- for having succumbed to lures, offers and propositions (in this case, physical rape), or for having genuflected to "generous offers" to "relocate" [in the case of institutional rape].

RAPE of Our Neighborhoods (William Morrow, \$8.95) author Bill Worthy gives a convincingly thorough, investigative account of his own five-year experience combating institutional invasion of his neighborhood.

The institution, a New York City hospital, attempted to take over and demolish the 48-unit apartment building where he lived and pave over the grounds for a 27-space parking lot to accommodate hospital employees.

But Worthy and other tenants, as well as sympathetic supporters, join forces against Columbia Hospital. Five years later, after enduring harassment, refusing bribes to relocate and engaging in legal battles -- the tenants won.

But victory does not come easy. Worthy emphasizes over and over again the need for a strong, united and well-informed community front -- a force comprised of tenants, lawyers and tenant supporters who are willing to volunteer their time and effort to picket and distribute leaflets, to research, be it zoning laws or housing codes, and keep the media informed.

Worthy does more than recount one isolated experience in New York City -- he also examines several cases of neighborhood rapes which have occurred nationwide or have been prevented from occurring because of active neighborhood resistance.

The journalist-tenant foresees by the end of the decade a linkage of tenant and community groups throughout the country that will exchange their specific and collective experiences to cope with encroaching institutions.

"The key building blocks are in this book and can be adapted to all kinds of particular terrains and adversaries," Worthy states. "It is not necessary to reinvent the wheel."

The Rape of Our Neighborhoods is a training manual of sorts, for organizing neighborhoods and community groups against the urban empire builders.

As Nat Hentoff concludes in the introduction of Worthy's book: "[*The Rape of Our Neighborhoods*] may be a kind of prophetic work if Bill proves correct in his Jeffersonian faith that once citizenry knows what to do to restore itself to democratic power -- first of all, in its own neighborhood -- it can change the quality of life."

And quality, as Worthy sees it, is not only political or environmental, but is the quality of daily life itself -- beginning in the homes of each and everyone of us. -- PAULA LAZOR

HOW THEY SHARE

A NEW study has found that -- of all the industrialized nations of the world -- the United States maintains one of the most unfair systems of distributing income.

The survey conducted by British economist Malcolm Sawyer, ranks twelve of the wealthiest industrial nations on the basis of the disparity between the income of the rich and the income of the poor.

The study concludes that the United States, along with France and Spain, maintain economic systems in which the gaps between the rich and the poor are the greatest. The statistics show that, in America, the poorest 20 percent of the households receive only 4.5 percent of the income. On the other hand, the richest ten percent of U.S. households account for 26.6 percent of the income.

The countries rated the fairest in distributing income were the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway and Japan.

NOTES FROM THE REAL WORLD

DESPITE what it is saying publicly, the United States Air Force is apparently taking the subject of unidentified flying objects very seriously.

An official workbook, used since 1970 to train cadets at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, concludes that UFO's are very possibly space ships controlled by intelligent beings.

The 500-page workbook, written by Major Donald Carpenter, says that UFO reports date back for almost 50,000 years. The book says it is "quite doubtful" that UFO reports can be explained by "psychological" causes, adding it is also "questionable" that flying saucers can be explained by known and unknown phenomena.

The book says "this leaves us with the unpleasant possibility of alien visitors or at least alien-controlled UFOs." It adds that the earth may have been visited by three or four different groups of aliens, "possibly at different stages of development."

The workbook's advice to young cadets is to keep an open but skeptical mind about UFOs.

FORMER President Lyndon B. Johnson secretly suspected that the CIA was involved in the 1963 assassination of President Kennedy, according to a copyrighted story in *The Detroit News*.

The News says that Johnson's suspicions about the CIA are spelled out in a draft report on the assassination prepared by the Senate Intelligence Committee -- but that the account was censored out of the final report, apparently at the CIA's request.

As *The News* tells it, Johnson instructed one of his White House aides, W. Marvin Watson, in April of 1967, to check with the F.B.I. in an effort to learn if elements within the CIA had conspired to murder President Kennedy.

The News adds that the portions of the Senate report which have been withheld from the public do not disclose what the FBI may have learned, if anything, about possible CIA involvement in the assassination.

The newspaper says the original Senate assassination report was 170 pages long, but only 106 pages were released to the public after the CIA and FBI reviewed the material and "pressured" senators into making certain deletions.

It is interesting to note that the US news media in general, following the release of the censored report, played up stories about Johnson suspecting that Fidel Castro may have been behind the assassination. *The News* is one of the few American publications to report that Johnson actually suspected that elements within the CIA, not Castro, may have plotted the Dallas murder.



LIKELIHOOD of exposure to dangerous air pollutants is related to income, occupation, rent and race, according to a recent study by economist William Kravant. Using data on carbon monoxide, hydrocarbon, sulfur dioxide and particulate pollution in a number of cities, Kravant's study shows that air pollution is most acute for people who are poor, black, engaged in non-professional occupations or live in low rent areas. Those who fit into more than one of those categories, particularly those who fit all four, are the most likely to be endangered by the air they breathe.

Hydrocarbon and CO pollution are caused mainly by automobiles. Sulfur dioxide and particulate pollution are caused mainly by industry and power plants, and acute cases of lower respiratory disease and chronic bronchitis.

In statistical terms, Kravant's study shows that of 13 per cent of the Washington DC areas where median income is less than \$7,000 per year, CO concentrations exceed the federally established safe maximum of 10 milligrams per cubic meter. Only one percent of the Washington DC census tracts with median incomes between \$7,000 and \$16,000 per year had this level. No areas with median income over \$16,000 per year had unsafe CO levels.

FORMER National Security Council member Morton Halperin says The Central Intelligence Agency currently maintains a massive network of secret agents on the campuses of more than 100 US universities.

Halperin says he learned of this alleged network from portions of the recent report of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence which have not been made public.

Halperin has refused to reveal how he learned the contents of those still-secret sections of the report; but he says they include the disclosure that the CIA maintains "one or two or perhaps several secret agents" on more than 100 American campuses.

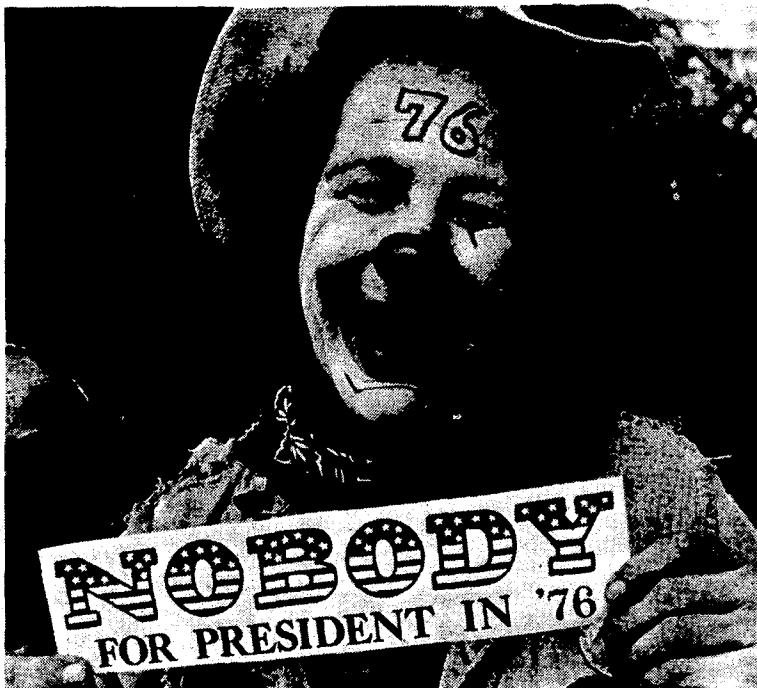
Halperin states that many of the covert operatives are faculty members who help the agency recruit potential employees from among their students. Others, he said, act as recruiters and approach foreign students, asking them to spy for the CIA when they return home.

A NEW survey has discovered that many Americans watch the evening news on television because it makes them feel good to know some people are worse off than they are.

Doctor Walter Gantz of the State University of New York at Buffalo, says a detailed telephone survey of TV viewers has found that a large percentage of people don't watch the news to become informed.

Instead, according to Gantz, "One-fourth said they were strongly motivated to watch the news because they felt better knowing that others had worse problems than they had."

Gantz adds that ten percent reported TV news helped them forget their own problems while another 10 percent said they tuned in the news because "they had nothing better to do."



NFTRW is compiled from our own sources and from Zodiac News Service, Liberation News Service, Pacific News Service, College Press Service, Community Press Features, and the Alternative Press Syndicate.



"Crime does not pay at your level..."

THE Village Voice has published new evidence suggesting the possibility that a "double" or exact look-alike for Lee Harvey Oswald may have engaged in suspicious activities in the Dallas area shortly before the assassination of President Kennedy.

The Village Voice is reporting that an agent with the Treasury Department has broken a twelve-year silence, and has admitted arresting a perfect Oswald look-alike in Dallas, shortly before the assassination, and then turning him loose.

The agent, Frank Ellsworth, describes this other man as being active in gun-running and anti-Castro activities and with having direct ties with the right wing, anti-Kennedy Minutemen organization.

A SAN DIEGO County grand jury has issued a scathing attack on the federal government's methadone maintenance program, calling it a dismal failure. The jury has instructed county officials to ask the state and federal government for permission to sell heroin to addicts at low cost instead of using methadone, a supposedly less harmful substitute for the real drug.

San Diego County officials are currently considering the grand jury recommendation. Some have predicted that if federal and state authorities grant permission for the unusual sales, heroin addicts would flock to San Diego from all over the country.

Heroin is currently distributed in several European countries under government supervised programs which seek to prevent addicts from resorting to robbery and violent crimes in order to support their drug habits.

THE Wall Street Journal is reporting that the Democratic presidential candidate has issued orders that top staff personnel should not go to bed with anyone but their own spouses.

The newspaper quotes one Carter aide as saying that Jimmy Carter, fearing a sex scandal "has let it be known that anybody who doesn't act straight, at least through November, is in trouble."

TWO of the strongest supporters of stiff marijuana enforcement during the Nixon administration have come out in support of laws which would decriminalize the controversial drug.

John Ehrlichman, former top assistant to Richard Nixon, and Egil "Bud" Krogh, head of a drug advisory force under the former president, both have told a Senate Government Operations subcommittee hearing in July that they favored pot laws similar to statutes in California and Oregon, in which traffic ticket-like citations are given for possession of small amounts of marijuana.

JUSTICE Department figures indicate that at least 1000 federal, state and local public officials have been convicted on federal corruption charges since 1970.

ECONOMIC NOTES, bulletin of the Labor Research Association, reports that health care costs have risen from \$12 billion in 1950 to \$95 billion in 1973 and \$118.5 billion in 1975.

The cost of health care averaged \$547 a person in 1974, or \$2,188 per family of four. As a result, reports the Council on Wage and Price Stability, "Americans on the average now are spending about 10% of their income for health care."

The cost of an average hospital stay rose from \$311 in 1965 to \$1,017 in 1975 -- while the average stay was shortened. Consumer Price Index figures from March 1975 to 1976 show that while the overall CPI rose 6.1% doctors' fees climbed 11.7%

UNIVERSITY OF Minnesota Professor John Brantner, who collects studies of people who live long lives reports he has found five distinct characteristics among those who live longer than others, the most important one, he says, is that people share their distress with others. "In other words," says the professor, "Complain."

Brantner says that letting out stressful feelings, or complaining, "relieves us of some of the burden," because we learn about suffering when we compare it with others.

Other ways, he says of keeping ahead of the geriatric set include making new friends, avoiding depression, keeping physically active and pursuing a cause.

THE Federal government, while assuring Americans that nuclear power plants are safe, has reportedly quietly drafted a disaster plan to cope with thousands of possible casualties in the event of a nuclear power plant accident.

The New York Times reports that the 43-page report, drafted May 3rd, spells out the roles of 32 federal agencies in evacuating citizens and treating victims in the event of an atomic plant accident.

Nuclear regulatory commission studies have indicated that such a mishap could result in 3300 immediate deaths, 45,000 cancer fatalities during the ensuing 30 years; \$14 billion in property damages; and the total abandonment of 290 square miles of land.

The Environmental Protection Agency, however, predicts that the long-term impact would be two-to ten-times higher.

IF you should ever encounter creatures from outer space, don't run away; don't try to shake hands; and don't offer them any food. Instead, stand still and try to listen.

This is the advice being offered by two researchers -- New York astronomer Kenneth Franklin and psychiatrist Dr. Alan Rosenberg.

The two doctors report that intelligent beings from other planets could easily misinterpret actions by a human that are intended to be friendly. Reaching out to shake hands, as an example -- if they have

hands -- might appear to be an attack.

Running away suddenly might also startle the creature, and handing it human food could cause an interchange of germs that might result in the poisoning of space visitors.

According to Doctors Franklin and Rosenberg, the best method of dealing with an inter-species encounter is to stand still, and perhaps to repeat a simple sentence like "Hello, I am a human being."

Doctor Rosenberg says that any higher being that has bothered to travel the billions of miles across space to visit the earth might also have learned a few rudimentary human phrases before landing.

OFFICIALS of the California Department of Water Resources, facing a staggering increase in energy needs over the next quarter century, have taken steps that could lead to construction of the nation's first fully commercial solar electricity plant.

The department has submitted a proposal to the U.S. Energy Research and Development Administration requesting \$960,000 to conduct an 18-month feasibility study of a radically new concept in solar electric plant design.

Created by University of California at Berkeley engineer Otto J.M. Smith, the design features modular construction and simple, available technology -- making it cost competitive with present fossil fuel power facilities, and as much as 50 to 60 percent cheaper than nuclear-generated electricity, according to its advocates.

AMERICAN cities and towns have enacted a variety of methods in efforts to keep pornographic publications and magazines out of town, but Bellflower, California, has come up with a new one:

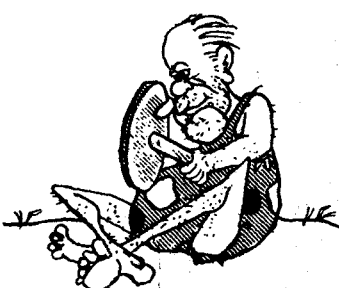
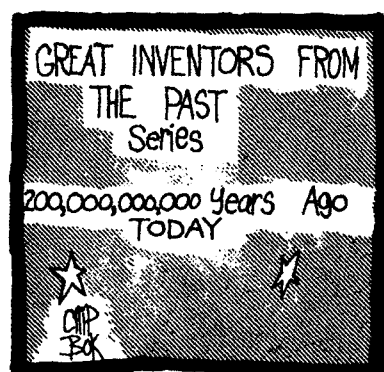
The city council there has simply banned all new bookstores. As might be expected, the constitutionality of the ordinance is being challenged in court.

Bellflower's city planning director Lee Wittenberg denies the anti-book store ordinance is an attempt at censorship; instead, Wittenberg claims it was passed to relieve "parking problems" in the town.

Bellflower currently has two religious bookstores, one health food store that sells books and one general book store.

THE Center for Science in the Public Interest has charged that nutrition professors at Harvard, at the Universities of Wisconsin, Iowa, and Massachusetts, and at many other prominent universities, have "traded their independence for the food industry's favors."

The center states that professors sit on the boards of directors, act as consultants, testify on behalf of industry at congressional hearings, and receive industry research grants from the country's major food processors. Many with corporate links also serve as "university" representatives on federal advisory committees, the report says.



THE ZONING GAME

A Citizen's Guide to DC Zoning

Ward Bucher, Author

Mary Helen Goodloe-Murphy and Catharine C. Kellier, Editors

Copyright 1976 by Ward Bucher

Published by North Dupont Community Association

The Zoning Game is one of the more popular sports played in our city. Its participants are all the people that make the District run—politicians, developers, planners, citizens. And, while possessing its own special rules and language, the game can be played with infinite variations of teams, numbers of players, strategies, and sizes of field. But every time the game is played, the goal is clear—change the zoning.

THE LINEUP

Here's a brief lineup of the teams and their strategies:

The MORE team—always chosen by the big developers—has a really strong bench with realtors, bankers, and the best lawyers and witnesses which money can buy. They want MORE density and MORE height so they can rent MORE space and make MORE money.

The LESS team—usually chosen by the residents trying to protect their neighborhood from real or imagined destruction. They want LESS zoning density and LESS building height so that the MORE team will be LESS likely to build something which will change their neighborhood.

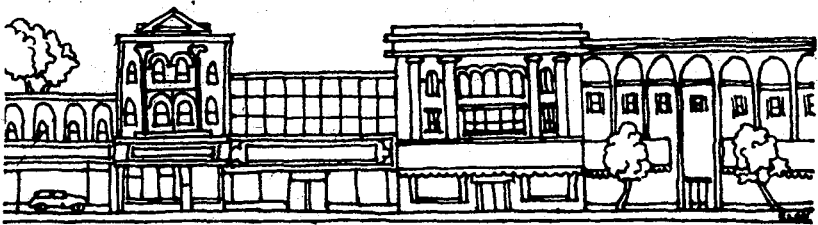
The GOVERNMENT plays on both the MORE and LESS teams and is also the referee. This schizophrenia seems to confuse them as well as other players. They want MORE development to increase the tax base, LESS development to preserve residential neighborhoods, and act as referee through the court system, Zoning Commission, and the bureaucracy. Often different departments and/or agencies within the government are on different teams at the same time.

FIRST GAME

Any team can start the play by applying to the Zoning Commission for a zoning change. Here's a typical set of plays by the MORE team:

1. Give the Mayor a thousand dollar campaign contribution.
2. Invite the Mayor and his planning staff to a rooftop cocktail party.
3. Tell the Mayor how important more new development is to the economic vitality of the District of Columbia.
4. Have all your banker friends repeat this message 100 times.
5. Buy a piece of residential property on the fringe of downtown.
6. Knock down all the existing townhouses.
7. Apply to the Zoning Commission for MORE (pick one or any combination)
 - (a) height
 - (b) density
 - (c) parking
 - (d) commercial use.

Of course, the LESS team doesn't know what's going on until the wrecking crane attacks the townhouses (Step 6). They immediately move into action by calling each other up and shouting "HELP! What can we do?" Usually the answer is that nothing can be done except to stand in front of the bulldozers. This tactic is great for publicity and a free tour of the local precinct station. But it doesn't buy much time (about three hours) and the buildings come down anyway.



TIMEOUT

Let's call a timeout to explain a few rules of the Zoning Game. Sorry, you never get to know all the rules because they keep changing, but here are five important ones:

NOTHING IS PERMANENT. That includes buildings, streets, people, and laws. Well, the Washington Monument is fairly permanent, but everything else is up for grabs. In particular, zoning in our city has been changing constantly since it was first enacted back in 1920.

COMMERCIAL USES MAKE MORE MONEY THAN RESIDENTIAL USES. Developers can make more profit renting an office building than an apartment house (even though the office building costs more). This is one of the basic motivating forces in zoning changes requested by the MORE team. Relatively cheap residential land which is rezoned for commercial use can easily double and triple in value.

ZONING CAN'T MAKE THE LANDOWNER BUILD ANYTHING. Just because the zoning map shows an area as a highrise office district doesn't mean that there are, or will be, any highrises built. The zoning regulations only spell out the maximum development allowed. If the owner wants to keep his land vacant or run a parking lot instead of a building, he has every right to do so. Downtown Washington is a good example of this. It has the highest zoning in the city and virtually no new construction in the last ten years. So beware of folks who claim that higher zoning will instantly redevelop a stagnant part of the city.

PEOPLE WILL PAY FOR FANTASIES. In particular, the fantasy that they are living or working in a "good," "safe," or "prestige" neighborhood. Rents and land prices are higher in certain areas of the city for reasons that have nothing to do with the quality or location of the area. For example, until the New Dealer's started moving into Georgetown in the 1930's instead of the ritzy 16th Street area, it was a rundown working-class community. Now the upper-middle-class people who can't afford Georgetown are moving into the working class neighborhoods around 16th Street in response to a new fantasy. The buildings, roads, location, and transportation of these neighborhoods have remained basically the same while the fantasies and people have changed. Developers try to anticipate and create these fantasies, so they can get the highest return on their investment.

EACH ZONE HAS ITS OWN RULES. At the moment, there are 24 different zoning categories in the District of Columbia. There are residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use categories. Each kind of zoning category has a different set of rules regulating uses, building size and location, and parking. These rules include such things as how big your back yard has to be, whether you can sell ice, and how much noise a factory can make. The entire city is mapped with hundreds of areas called zoning districts or zones where one of the categories applies.

TIME-IN

Ready to start the game again. The LESS team can also make the first play in the Zoning Game. A recent LESS game started like this:

1. The Municipal Planning Office (MPO) or the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) or the Department of Housing decides to do a neighborhood plan. Why there are at least three different agencies doing planning in one city and how they choose what areas to plan would have to be explained in another guide called "THE D.C. PLANNING GAME."
2. It is discovered that full development of the present zoning in the neighborhood would create a ten-mile traffic jam every day.
3. The Highway Department proposes a freeway to handle the increased traffic.
4. The residents go berserk and organize politically.
5. A "compromise" plan with no freeway and substantially reduced zoning is proposed to the Zoning Commission.
6. The landowners go berserk.

Of course, a government agency doesn't always end up on the LESS team. Often they are on the MORE BUT DIFFERENT team which increases density while changing uses as in the Georgetown Waterfront and the West End.

The Redevelopment Land Agency (RLA) has for years had its own special NOTHING team which bypasses zoning altogether. This urban renewal agency, now part of the Department of Housing and Community Development, buys property, tears down the houses, and creates NOTHING.

ANOTHER GAME

It's not necessary to have the "big boys" (developers or planning agencies) start the zoning game. In the Dupont Circle area the residents' LESS team won a game like this:

1. The Salvation Army assembles 11 townhouses.
2. Two hundred elderly and low-income residents are given eviction notices, so the property can be sold to a highrise developer.
3. The community petitions the Zoning Commission for a rezoning.
4. The Commission agrees to hold a public hearing.
5. The residents make a big stink about the "do-gooders" throwing out the poor and elderly, and evictions are delayed by court action.
6. Walter Fauntroy and Tedson Meyers give anti-highrise speeches.
7. At the hearing, MPO supports the changes and NCPC opposes them. Residents, with citywide support, present 10 hours of well-organized testimony. The developers chant "Money, money, money..."
8. The "Demolition Dozen" get arrested trying to stop the wrecking crane.
9. The rezoning decision is announced in favor of the residents' LESS team.

Of course, getting a zoning change doesn't end the game. Remember the "NOTHING IS PERMANENT" rule. In this case the MORE team is trying to have the zoning decision reversed by the courts.

PUBLIC AND SECRET GAMES

These three games have many plays which seemingly have no direct connection to zoning. There are really two games being played—the public game and the secret game.

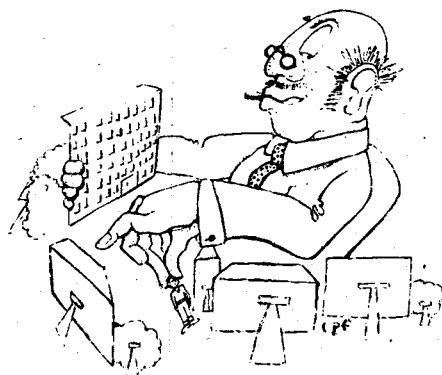
The public game is played with the bureaucracy and the court system. It features hearings, memos, reports, court orders, and petitions. Usually, this is the only game officials will admit they are playing.

The secret game is dirty, unscrupulous, and altogether more interesting than the public one. This game features votes, donations, phone calls, and tradeoffs. The rules are unspoken, but commonly understood: "You won't get elected if you don't do what we want;" "I won't support your case if you don't support my campaign." Most often zoning decisions are made for political (secret) reasons and then rationalized through the public legal apparatus.

The preceding material is designed to give you a general idea of how the D.C. Zoning Game works. It is impossible to tell you everything because the rules and players keep changing. Each case is truly unique, but they do have a number of common elements. The following section contains a number of steps that citizens can take to win a game for their side.

THE PUBLIC GAME

1. **APPLICATION FOR AMENDMENT FILED.** An application for an amendment to the Zoning Regulations or the Zoning Map can be filed by the owner of the affected property, the Zoning Commission itself, the National Capital Planning Commission, or any D.C. or Federal agency. When a community group wants to change the zoning it must convince some agency or the Zoning Commission to make the application for them.
2. **COMMISSION ACCEPTS APPLICATION.** The Zoning Commission can turn down an application if it thinks it is inappropriate without ever having a public hearing. If the application is rejected with prejudice, the applicant must wait 6 months before reapplying. The commission receives advice from its staff at its open monthly meeting and decides whether to put the case on its calendar for a public hearing.
3. **PUBLIC HEARING ADVERTISED.** A zoning hearing must be advertised in newspapers and other publications at least 30 days before the hearing date.



4. **PUBLIC HEARING.** The government, the proponents, and the opponents of a change in the zoning map or regulations all get to voice their opinions at the hearing. The hearing may last a few hours or several days.
5. **RECORD CLOSED.** The case file which makes up the official record of a case is held open for 10 days after the conclusion of the hearing. Anyone may make additional written comments during this time.
6. **THE COMMISSION DECIDES THE CASE.** After the hearing has been held and the record closed, the Zoning Commission meets to decide the case. They thrash out the pros and cons of the case and vote on the zoning change. When everyone pretty much agrees to start with, as in the recent limiting of massage parlors, the decision doesn't take long. When a complex zoning proposal for a whole neighborhood is considered the process can take months. This long period of time is necessary in order to decide involved technical issues and to make the political tradeoffs of the "secret game."
7. **THE ORDER IS WRITTEN.** The Zoning Commission's decision is not announced until an official order has been written. This order must include findings of fact, conclusions of law, and the decision itself.
8. **THE DECISION IS ANNOUNCED.**
9. **THE DECISION IS PUBLISHED IN NEWSPAPERS AND THE D.C. REGISTER.**
10. **THE LOSERS GO TO COURT.** In most of the recent cases decided by the Zoning Commission the losing team has appealed the case to the D.C. Court of Appeals. If the court finds that the hearing was conducted incorrectly it can tell the Commission to go through the hearing process all over again.

Help!

This is a brief outline of how to react to a play by the MORE (or LESS) team. It needn't be followed exactly, but it will get you started.

1. GET A COPY OF THE PUBLIC RULES.

Most of the public rules are contained in the "Zoning Regulations" and the "Administrative Procedures Act." These are the official rules which tell you what the zoning is and how the zoning process is supposed to be conducted. The zoning hearing is like a court of law in that the case may be won or lost on minor technicalities. You don't need to be a lawyer to understand this stuff, but do re-read it several times. The rules can be purchased at 614 H Street, N.W., Room 302. Cost of the regulations: \$4.00; new zoning atlas, \$2.50. You might call first to be sure they have copies available: 629-3957.

2. CHECK THE ZONING.

It is absolutely essential to know what the present zoning is on the land in question. There are zoning maps in the back of the Zoning Regulations, but the Zoning Atlas is more up-to-date. The only way to be absolutely sure of the present zoning is to check with the official maps kept by the Zoning Commission staff. This means trooping down to the Sixth floor of the Muncey Building at 1329 E Street, N.W. The zoning lines dividing the various Districts have been drawn in a four-volume set of Baist Atlases. Each page of these monster books has a map of a small section of the city. The map will show all of the streets and property lines, and, most important, the current zoning.

3. READ THE CASE FILE.

Every application for a zoning change is placed in a file at the Zoning Commission. This application states exactly what is being asked for and also contains all communications to the Commission regarding that case. The files are located in Room 11 of the District Building, 14th and E Streets, N.W. Make a list of what's in the file; then, recheck it before the hearing. (The file is not available the day before the hearing.)

4. FIND OUT WHO OWNS THE LAND.

The applicant for a zoning change must be the owner of the property. Applications are sometimes made by people renting a property or people who intend to purchase the property. Ownership can be checked out by contacting the Recorder of Deeds in Room 202, 515 D Street, N.W. Telephone: 347-0671, extension 12, between 2 and 4 p.m. Be sure and have the lot and square numbers for the property. Get the numbers from the Baist Atlas you looked in for the zoning in Step 2.

5. TALK TO THE APPLICANT.

The developer is usually willing to explain his project to you so that he can convince you that it's a good thing. Information can also be gotten from the owner of the property, the architect, and the lawyers for the project. Their names and addresses can all be found in the case file at the Zoning Commission.

6. GET TECHNICAL HELP.

Zoning cases often involve matters where the advice and testimony of experts can be a great help. Architects, lawyers, planners, and economists can all be useful. If at all possible, find these people inside your community. Community residents are much more willing to help and much less likely to charge for their services. Certain public-spirited Architecture and Law firms do Pro Bono Publico (In the Public Interest) work for free. Be gracious about asking for free work, since they do have to earn a living.

7. PLAN YOUR POLITICAL STRATEGY.

Zoning cases are decided by politics, not rational judgments. Design a strategy putting political pressure on the government to support your side. Scheme and plot exactly what your group is going to do and who is going to do it.

8. SELL YOUR POSITION.

You need to sell your position to the government planners, the Mayor, City Council Members, your Congressman, and other people in power positions. Make an appointment with these people or their aides, saying who will be in attendance and the general subject matter. It helps to have a one-page fact sheet which outlines the history of the case, the basic points supporting your side, and the outcome you want. Have in mind the particular action you wish that person to take—writing a letter, testifying at the hearing, contacting someone higher on the totem pole, etc.

9. GET BROAD-BASED COMMUNITY SUPPORT.

Get as many people on your team as possible. This means young and old, black and white, property owners and renters, businessmen, religious groups, and so on. Support can come from the most unlikely elements of your community, so don't hesitate to approach anyone. Much of the work will be educational: i.e., explaining what zoning is and how this particular change will affect (or not affect) a particular interest group.

10. MAKE A BIG STINK.

The politician's favorite way of dealing with an unpleasant problem is to ignore it and hope it goes away. Lots of publicity makes your problem impossible to ignore. Be creative and entertaining to get good media coverage. In planning an event or confrontation to dramatize your position, contact the reporters, but not too far in advance or they will forget. Your fact sheet from Step 8 is a handy thing to give the media so they'll get the story straight.

11. GET SET FOR THE HEARING.

The zoning hearing is the most important public event of the whole zoning game. It is the formal

display of your political clout and technical expertise. A well-orchestrated performance will impress the Commission and all of the other players who are there to watch the show.

12. A. ORGANIZE TESTIMONY IN ADVANCE.

Be sure all the points will be covered and that each person knows what to say. Testimony covering legal and technical points should be written and submitted at the hearing. Other testimony should at least be outlined. Each person should speak for no more than ten minutes. Short statements that don't overlap are much better than endless repetitions of the same opinions. Since the hearings often go on all day for several days, arrange to telephone working people when their turn to testify is approaching. It also may help to have a dress rehearsal a few days before the hearing.

B. HAVE THE "BIG GUNS" TESTIFY FIRST.

The Zoning Commission tends to fall asleep after two or three hours of testimony due to information overload. Have the politically most important people testify before the Commissioners go into their catatonic trance. A typical arrangement of speakers in order of clout would go like this:

- a. Elected officials
- b. National organizations
- c. Regional organizations
- d. Community groups outside your neighborhood
- e. Neighborhood community groups
- f. Property owners within the area to be rezoned
- g. Property owners in the surrounding area
- h. Renters
- i. Businesses in support
- j. Facts and figures (technical data proving your position)

Fill the hearing room with people supporting your position. Circulate a list to let the Zoning Commission know the community was there.

12. DON'T STOP AFTER THE HEARING.

If you relax and wait for the decision three months or a year later, you may have an unhappy surprise. Keep up the publicity efforts and the political pressure until you have a copy of the official order in your hand and you've read it in the D.C. Register.

13. DON'T CONTACT MEMBERS OF THE ZONING COMMISSION DIRECTLY.

When a party to a zoning case talks to a commissioner without going through formal channels it is called Ex Parte Communication. This is a definite No-No. The losing side can have the decision set aside if procedural irregularities can be proven. So don't call up the Commissioners or their staff and bend their ear about the case. It is O.K. to make inquiries about hearing dates and other procedural matters. It is also O.K. for people not involved in the case to talk to the Commissioners. So it doesn't hurt for a friend of a friend who knows somebody to let his feelings be known.

14. PUT IT IN WRITING.

Politicians and planners can have very selective memories. Document important conversations, meetings, and requests. Send them a letter summarizing basic agreements or requests. Send a copy to at least two other officials so they can't say they never got it. For example, copies of a request for help from the Municipal Planning Office could be sent to the Mayor and the City Council member from your Ward.

15. DON'T BELIEVE ANYONE!

"Official sources" pass on the most outrageous rumors. Before you feed the grapevine, have someone check it out.

16. GOOD LUCK!

Definitions



Workbook/cpf

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT: Appeals of administrative decisions and the granting of variance and special exceptions are handled by the Board of Zoning Adjustment. The Board must also approve the site plans for Planned Unit Developments. The variance power of the Board allows them to change *any* zoning regulation if they so choose. The Board has five members; three are appointed by the Mayor, one is the representative of the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), and the other is a member of the Zoning Commission or a designated representative. The present members of the Board of Zoning Adjustment are:

- William Harps, Chairman
- Lila Burt Cummings, Esquire
- William MacKintosh, NCPC, Vice Chairman
- A Zoning Commission Member (on a rotating basis)
- Leonard McCant.

DOWNZONING: Downzoning is a zoning change which lessens the amount of development which is possible. A downzoning might involve a change in height (i.e., from 90 feet to 60 feet), a change in use (from commercial to residential), or a change in density (from F.A.R. 3.0 to F.A.R. 1.8).

F.A.R. (FLOOR AREA RATIO): Floor Area Ratio is basically a measure of the volume of a building. The floor area of a building is the total area of all floors including walls. The amount of a floor area allowed in a new building is determined by multiplying the area of the property (lot area) by the F.A.R. This total floor area can be distributed all on one floor or on many different floors.

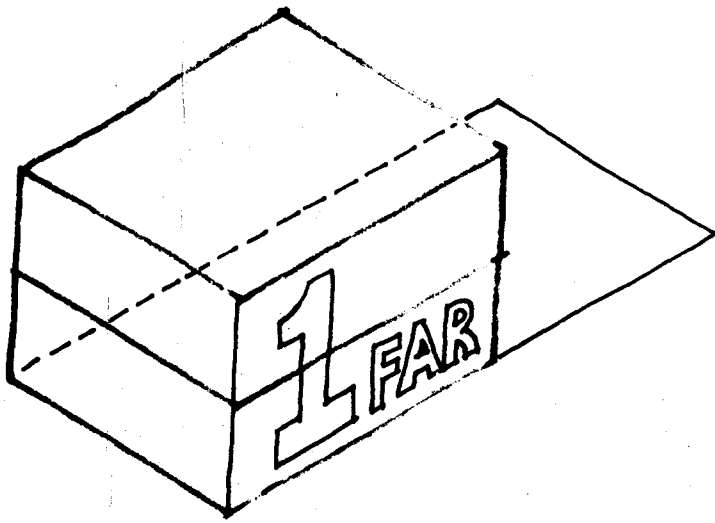
For example: if the lot size is 50 feet by 20 feet, the lot area is 1,000 square feet (50'x20') and the lot has an F.A.R. of 2.0, the floor area allowed would be 2,000 square feet. If the building were two stories tall, each floor would have 1,000 square feet of area. If it were four stories tall, each floor would have 500 square feet of area.

Each zone district has an F.A.R. assigned to it by the Zoning Regulations, ranging from .9 to 10 F.A.R. The higher the F.A.R., the bigger the building that can be built.

HEIGHT: The height of a building is the vertical distance from the street curb in front of the middle of the building to the main roof. The height does not include those little pillbox hats which house elevators and air conditioning equipment.

The permitted height of a structure is determined both by the width of the street at the front and by the zoning district the property is in. When the building faces more than one street, the developer can choose either one as the front. There are all sorts of variations and exceptions to the height requirements. Check both the height requirements for a particular District and the 1910 Height Act which is an appendix to the Zoning Regulations.

The height allowed in the zoning requirements can be translated into number of stories by dividing by the number of feet per story. Residential construction is usually nine or 10 feet per story and office construction is about 12 feet per story. For example, a 90-foot apartment building usually has ten stories.

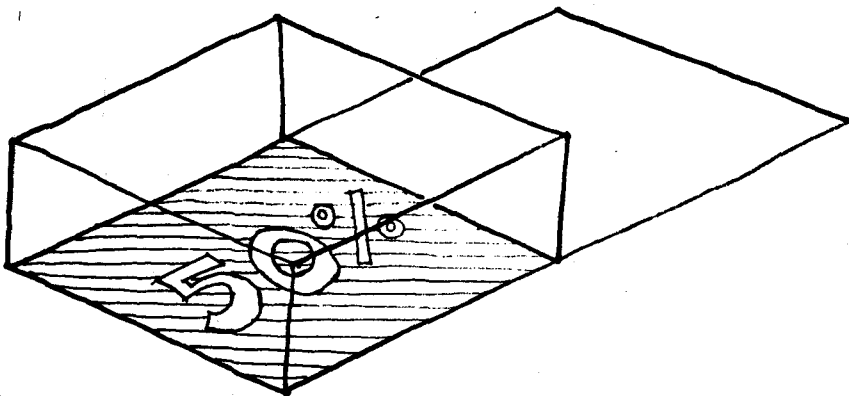


LOT NUMBER: Every property in the District is identified by a square and lot number. Originally, when a block or square was subdivided each lot was numbered serially (1, 2, 3, etc.). When a big lot is made into smaller lots, or two or more lots are made into one big one, the new lots are given new numbers. This sometimes causes confusion because the official zoning reference maps have lot numbers from 1966.

Currently new numbers are in the 800's. If you can't find an 800 number on the map, go to the Recorder of Deeds' office and find out what old lots the new one was made of.

LOT OCCUPANCY: Lot occupancy is a measure of how much land a building covers at ground level. If a building covers all of its own lot, then the lot occupancy is 100%. If a building has a big back yard and only covers 3/4's of the property, then the lot occupancy is 75%.

Most commercial zones allow total coverage of the lot or a lot occupancy of 100% while residential zones require that space be left open for light and air circulation.



PERMITTED USE: Each zoning district (R-5-B, C-4, SP, etc.) has certain uses which are permitted as a matter of right, others that are permitted with a **SPECIAL EXCEPTION**, and some uses that are expressly prohibited. Washington started out with just three types of zoning categories: **RESIDENTIAL**, which permitted different types of living accommodations; **COMMERCIAL**, which permitted retail, office, and residential uses; and **INDUSTRIAL**, which permitted storage, manufacturing, and commercial uses. Planning and zoning theory in the past decreed that uses should be strictly segregated into these three categories. However, more recently it has been discovered that some mixture of these three types can be a very healthy thing. This has led to the creation of "mixed-use districts" which have commercial, residential, and industrial uses all mixed together. If you want to see whether a particular use is permitted in your district check the table in Appendix B of the Zoning Regulations. Unfortunately this table doesn't include the newer mixed-use districts which have been mapped in the West End and the Georgetown Waterfront.

P.U.D.: The P.U.D. (Planned Unit Development) process is a variation of the MORE game. In exchange for increased height, density, etc., the developer provides public amenities and allows the Zoning Commission to review the site plan and the building design. The amenities are things like parks and street improvements paid for by the developer. Historically, the Zoning Commission has been very liberal on the developer's side of the balance without much benefit to the public. The complete P.U.D. process can be found in the Zoning Regulations.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING OFFICE (MPO): This office is responsible for city planning in the District and is part of the Mayor's executive staff. A part of the staff deals with city-wide and neighborhood plans, while another part deals with technical zoning matters.

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION (NCPC): This is a federal commission which makes policy decisions concerning the federal interest in the Washington metropolitan area. Its staff does planning in areas of the District where the U.S. government will be affected. This planning often overlaps and contradicts planning done by the Municipal Planning Office. Currently there is a gentlemen's agreement that MPO and NCPC will not get involved in areas already selected for study by the other.

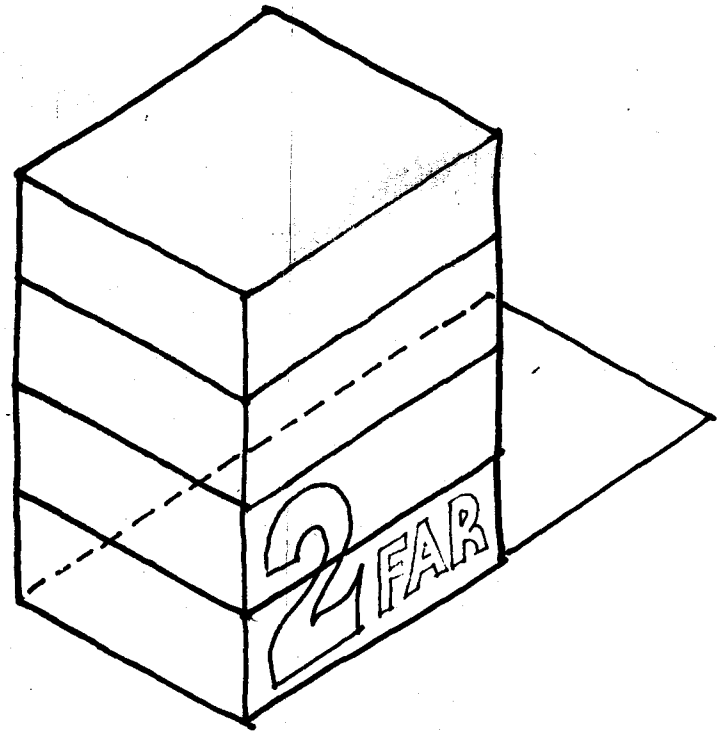
SECTIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (SDP): A Sectional Development Plan is a detailed plan for a neighborhood. Such a plan is prepared during a lengthy public planning process involving all elements of the community including residents, developers, businessmen, government agencies, etc. It includes a zoning plan as well as many other elements such as traffic, schools, parks, and housing. The Zoning Commission, to whom the plan is referred, can only implement the zoning portion of the SDP, which may mean the rest of the plan gathers dust on the shelf.

SPOT ZONING: In theory, all properties in the same situation (location, access, existing use, etc.) must be treated equally. If one person's land is zoned differently from his immediate neighbors for no apparent reasons then this is an illegal spot zoning. For example, if a townhouse in the middle of a block is zoned to allow a store while all the other townhouses can only be used for residential purposes, this would constitute spot zoning.

SQUARE NUMBER: All the blocks in the District are numbered sequentially. The square numbers are used to identify a particular location within the city. Usually both the square and lot number of a property are given at the same time.

Frequently two or more blocks will have the same square number. This is especially true where a diagonal avenue cuts through the rectangular street system.

VARIANCE: A variance is the waiving of some provision of the Zoning Regulations. The BZA



(Board of Zoning Adjustment) can change any regulation if the new owner of the property can prove a hardship due to some unusual physical condition of his land. For example, an owner with a small triangular piece of land caused by one of our many diagonal avenues might ask that the requirement for a rear yard be waived because he wouldn't have any land left to build on.

In theory, an owner can only get a variance in extreme situations. However, variances are routinely granted unless someone protests. Note: a **VARIANCE** is not the same thing as a **SPECIAL EXCEPTION**.

SPECIAL EXCEPTION: Certain changes in use, density, and building location requirements of the Zoning Regulations may be granted after review by the BZA (Board of Zoning Adjustment). The exact kinds of changes permitted are spelled out in the Special Exceptions section of the regulations.

A typical Special Exception request might be to locate a school in a residential neighborhood. The BZA would approve such a request if it found the use to be in general harmony with the area. A Special Exception is considerably easier to get than a Variance.

ZONING COMMISSION: The Zoning Commission determines the Zoning Regulations and the Zoning map for the District of Columbia.

The Commission has five members. Three members are appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. The other two members are a representative of the National Park Service and the Architect of the Capitol.

At the moment, the Commissioners are:

Walter B. Lewis

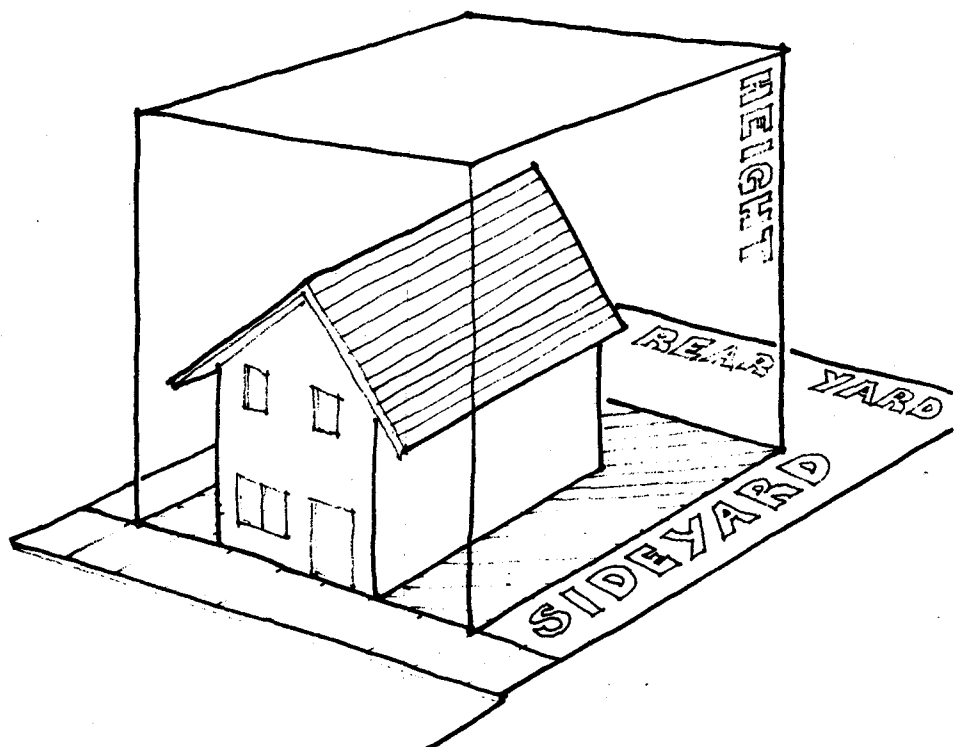
Ruby B. McZier

Richard L. Stanton, National Park Service

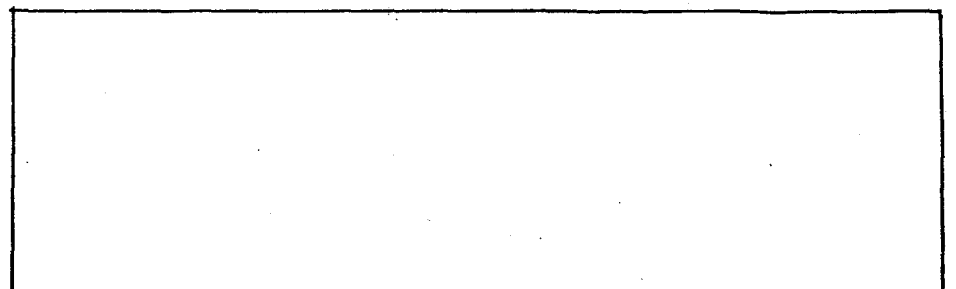
George M. White, Architect of the Capitol

Theodore Marianni

ZONING ENVELOPE: The Zoning Envelope is what's possible to build on a particular piece of property under current zoning. Just like a paper bag, sometimes it's too small, sometimes too large, for what's inside. The imaginary zoning envelope physically compares what exists to what's possible. For example:



To figure out zoning envelope: Select a parcel or district. Apply existing zoning regulations including height, side, and rear yard requirements, and set back from the street to determine the size of the bag. Is it too small for what exists (non-conforming)? Too large (over-zoned)?



REED'S YEAR CONT'D

not interested in all those methods. If you know the material, you can learn the methods. In teacher training school, you learn the methods, but you don't learn the material. I think that's why the schools are falling apart." Mason explained that the board and the superintendent are trying to work out a mutually satisfactory policy on teacher retraining. The school system has recently adopted a policy of a five year teaching certificate. Each teacher must take six college credits every five years for recertification, three in his/her field, and three in some other field. Staff development, or what the system does on an organized basis to bring teachers up to date, was termed by one parent as "utterly ridiculous, when you talk about four and a half days a year. All the teachers pile into an auditorium and listen to a lecture."

Many parents feel that education makes it or breaks it with the teachers and the principals, and new educational approaches are of little importance next to the need to be able to fire incompetent teachers. Not surprisingly, nobody wants to be quoted on this issue. One parent explained the process of getting rid of a teacher. "If a principal wants to get rid of anyone he thinks is a bad teacher, he/she has to get the teacher transferred. This means lying to another school, and saying, well maybe she/he will work out in your situation. If they want to get the teacher fired, they can only begin the process on the grounds of gross personal misconduct or professional incompetence which results in dismissal from the system. There should be some system of professional review."

Another parent added, "Before, the system was definitely unresponsive to serious educational problems. How responsive it is now remains to be seen. I applaud Vince Reed's no nonsense approach, but I don't know how he's going to go about getting rid of incompetent teachers. It gets down to who you care more about, the nice lady who's been in the classroom for 15 years, and probably doesn't belong there anyway, or the kids."

A parent who is involved in a battle with a regional office to remove a principal, characterized the response of the administration to parents' requests as "negative" and "passing the buck." A teacher working under a federal grant program, who had had success teaching pre-school children to read, was abruptly transferred out of this school. The parent discussed the situation with a note of discouragement. "It may not seem important to other people, but it's important to us. We pick up the paper and see how District children are behind in reading, and then we get a teacher who's willing and able to teach children to read and she's transferred. The regional office says it knows best, in essence parents aren't anything. It's left me with mixed emotions about the regional superintendents and their fuctions and the superintendent. It seems to me that somebody has to be accountable to someone, but now it's just passing the buck. I think it's bad, especially when children come from low income families, where people are just scrambling to survive. I don't see any need for children to have to suffer at school."

Ginnie Johnson, the educational coordinator at Friendship House, stated, "They need to revamp the whole thing, to go to the institutions that teach teachers. Many teachers come from DC Teachers College and don't know how to deal with the students. Nobody's ready to say we have to evaluate teachers, and weed out the ones who are not doing their jobs."

Several parents stressed the importance of the principal in changing the atmosphere of the local school. Virginia Cash, PTA Council President of Area IIB, said, "I got involved in the schools back about three years ago when the kids were reading out of 12, 14 year-old books, the teachers at Rudolph school weren't teaching the kids, they were spending all their time talking in the corridors, and letting

the kids play on the playground. We got a new principal, and she made sure that classes started on time, she made every teacher write her lesson plan on the board the night before and checked attendance twice a day." Now Rudolph has four all-day kindergartens, largely due to pressure from parents, and the PTA holds fund drives for every imaginable piece of school equipment from basketball uniforms to paper and pens.

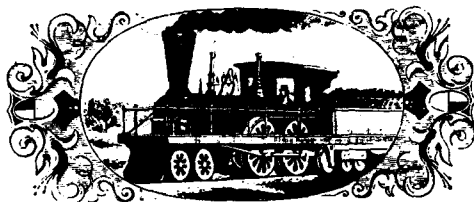
Educators all seem to agree that parent involvement is a big factor in the improvement of education. Certainly that seems to be borne out in the District, where schools such as Sheppard, Lafayette, Rudolph, and Edmonds-Peabody that have a high level of parent involvement also have outstanding educational programs. However, declining enrollments and the financial crisis are bringing parents in conflict with the educational bureaucracy on the subject of teacher quality. One parent, whose experiences with the fiefdoms in her local school and regional office had made her less than optimistic, said "It's my feeling that for all the schools talk about parent involvement, they don't want it. They want to see parents cutting out shapes with the preschool, but they view a discussion of measurable goals as a threat."

It seems to be the attitude of most parents and administrators in DC that the school system has come a long way in the past year. Certainly it has a long way to go, but people are willing to cooperate in the hope that things will improve. You don't get that sense of wagons drawn around the local schools defending themselves from attacks by the Presidential Building that you did a year and a half ago. The school system has also made a move to deal with its longest running financial problem. On September 15, the board unanimously voted to sue the mayor to end what they view as the illegal impoundment of funds and freezing of positions. To date the mayor has frozen 674 non-teaching positions. Although the school system is broke, they do have the money on hand to fill some of these positions. The way the system currently works, the schools are not allowed to decide which positions they want to fill. The money budgeted for staff frozen by the mayor goes back into the general fund, "...to buy cars for Joe Yeldell," as one parent put it.

Last year the system had a \$1.5 million surplus, which it was unable to carry over into this fiscal year. The budget this year is \$13 million short of what administrators say is the minimum needed to keep the schools open.

The board maintains that the mayor is in violation of Section 452 of Title IV of the Home Rule Act, which gives the mayor and the city council authority to establish the maximum amount of funds allocated to the Board, "...but (the mayor) may not specify the purposes for which such funds may be expended or the amount of such funds which may be expended for the various programs under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education." According to the counsel for the board, David Splitt, the mayor violates the law by freezing positions and refusing to enact reprogrammings of funds that have been authorized by Congress. The position of the corporation counsel on the legality of the mayor's actions is somewhat unclear.

Given the fact that the DC school system does not have the power to raise its own revenue (unlike 41 out of the 50 largest city school systems), it is slightly more understandable that they have budget problems. They are no longer in a hold due to their own fiscal mismanagement, and they are taking the first steps down the road toward making the system accountable for producing a competent student. Right now it's up to the parents, the teachers, the students and the voters to make sure they get there.



DC DAIRY CONT'D

a more friendly and hopeful environment than home, yet not alien from home.

The days of Washington being properly described as a "sleepy southern town" are over. But Washingtonians still in their thirties grew up in a segregated southern city. And direct southern political rule of the city did not end until the 1970s with the defeat of DC's unofficial but near absolute mayor, House District Committee chairman John McMillan.

The civil rights movement changed Washington as it changed the rest of the south. But there was another force that made the New South possible here and elsewhere: air conditioning. Air conditioning permitted the introduction of northern values and northern-style urban development. If you want the place to hustle it helps mightily to keep the temperature down. When I was a kid here in the forties, the British considered Washington a tropical hardship post. Summer was hot, sleepless nights on sweat-soaked sheets hot. The summers seem much milder now. They aren't, but now I only go into them by choice or when I get a bus whose cooler is on the blink. It's a big difference. I mentioned it to a friend the other day and he recalled a letter to the Times many years ago in which the author, a southern writer, proposed solving the civil rights problem by constructing an air conditioned dome over the south. It was too easy to hate when you were hot, he suggested.

By 1960 Washington was civil enough and had enough civil rights for John Kennedy, in the preemptory spirit of Massachusetts adventurers, to become the first president to claim the city for the north. Over the next decade, the northern hustlers moved into town, the planners, the big money boys, a surge of grandiose schemes that the penny-pinching southern conservative clique that had dominated the town for so long had little taste for. Today, William Natcher remains a lone outpost of southern values among the city's federal bosses, a fading reminder of the southern plantation that DC was for so long.

But it is important not to confuse, although it's done constantly, the style, values and policies of the city's colonial overlords with those of its people. For while colonial control has shifted northwards over the past fifteen years, the city that lies under the media image has resisted its transformation into a northern metropolis with a mixture of charm and misfortune. The charm includes a sense of scale, a lack of frenetic bustle, a minimal amount of pretentiousness and an unwillingness to remove the human from even official proceedings.

The misfortune stems in part from the ambivalence of a southern town trying to act like a northern city. It knows it should but it doesn't quite know how and it isn't convinced it really wants to. Not all the muddle in the District Building can be traced to incompetence. In part, at least, it is the result of a government that says it believes in progress but acts as though it likes things pretty much the same. The northern go-go, aggressive, puritan spirit is remarkably absent everywhere except in the rhetoric.

At times the easy-going approach is maddening and disastrous. The sick, the jailed, the ill-housed have suffered mightily as a result. On the other hand, the city was a national leader in the battle against freeways -- a case of progress gone awry. DC's let-well-enough-alone attitude has been the bone of many developers and big-time schemers who could, given a more aggressive local climate, done far more damage than they have. And such symptoms of northern urban decay as gangs and graffiti have been pleasingly rare.

A strong case could be made that DC would do better if it would give up its recently acquired northern pretensions and instead refind and refine its southern heart. There are, after all, only a few northern cities worth imitating and our attempts to join the bigtimers up north have largely brought us grief and huge deficits. A little less advice from the

carpetbaggers and a little more inquiry into our own values and culture might be the place to start.

One of the things we'd find is a strong southern influence in our people and our lifestyle that could be cultivated to the city's benefit. And besides, it would help Jimmy Carter feel right at home.

ONE of the less appealing characteristics of the city council is its capacity to take itself seriously. Henry Robinson could have mitigated the pomposity. Doc Robinson was an extraordinary politician, one who was not only right on many issues but a thoroughly appealing individual as well. Part of his appeal was his humor which on numerous occasions, while he sat on the appointed council, burst the tedium of bureaucratic doubletalk or jammed the gears of a political machination. And part was that he was a kind and concerned person who saw politics as a means not an end. He made one mistake. He was a Republican and when the city elected its home rule government, Doc lost in Ward Five to Democrat William Spaulding. Last summer, Doc died at 70. We will miss the basset hound face, full of cheer and compassion, and the white shoes that carried great decency on missions around the District Building. Doc was a rarity -- a politician you could really like.

IT SO HAPPENED that I had just finished reading a collection of background papers prepared by his zone's staff in preparation for the local fiscal Armageddon when the mayor called a news conference to introduce his 1978 budget. It had not been entirely clear from reading the fiscal crisis report that there would be a 1978 budget. A \$157 million gap between revenues and expenses had been projected and to meet it the mayor had asked his department heads to consider a passle of options that, in summary, involved giving or selling the local government away with whatever left over being placed on federal relief. It was a provoking -- no, scary, document for, after all, \$157 million is about the sum currently collected for property taxes. It sounds like a lot and it is.

How would the mayor deal with this deficit (which, according to his own prophecy, would grow larger each year)? I hurried down the newly carpeted hallway of the mayor's office, slumped into a soft blue armchair in the conference room and waited for the end.

The mayor walked in accompanied by Comer Coppie, the David Hemmings of fiscal politics, who looked about as cheery as a seasick Eric Severeid. The mayor began reading his statement. Two paragraphs in, a rabbit, four colored handkerchiefs and three doves leaped off the page: "The budget submitted does not propose any tax increases for the 1978 Fiscal Year."

Just like that. The gap had disappeared. Where had it gone? Well, to his credit, part of the gap was eliminated when Walter cut his budget. It's not the sort of thing the mayor likes to do and it undoubtedly hurt him as it will hurt us. There will be arguments, important ones, over whether the right things got cut, but at least for the first time the mayor showed signs of putting his austerity where his mouth is.

But the trimmings were not enough. Now the going gets tricky. Follow my hands closely:

First there's the change-the-due-date routine. Get someone to pay what they owe the city earlier than traditional, sliding money from one fiscal year into the previous one. Walter will get \$8 million extra by changing the due date of personal property taxes, \$20 million by changing the date the federal government pays for water and sewer services. Of course, this only works once with each item, leaving a \$28 million gap to be covered in fiscal 1979.

Then there's the disappearing item trick. To cover an expense for which you lack revenues, simply remove the item from the budget entirely. For fiscal 1978 the mayor has done this with Metrorail operating subsidies and FY 77 pay raises not yet finally approved. Well done. Subtract \$50

million from your gap and worry about it later.

Now we come to a new one. One way to keep taxes down is to charge for services formerly paid out of taxes. User charges are mostly paid by the same people who pay taxes, although tending to change the services from being generally available to being available to only those able to pay for them. The city has shown a growing interest in user charges. This year the city is proposing \$5 million in user charges including \$35 per ambulance ride. Please remember, however, that this is not a tax. You are not required to pay it. If you don't wish to, you can walk to DC General.

Finally to round things off, you up your revenue estimates and add \$20 million to the federal payment. Hopefully Messrs. Natcher and Childs will agree.

So you see, it's all very simple. Makes you wonder why we had to raise taxes \$135 million over the past two years. And makes you impatient for the next big act that inevitably must follow next fall: Walter Washington Juggles An Election Year Deficit Plus \$78 Million (Count 'Em!) Postponed From Last Year.

IT has been an exceptional season for viewing with alarm. Coming with a numbing repetitiousness that reminded you of battle reports from Vietnam, the press has detailed the horrors and inadequacies of the city's various institutions. Yet it is difficult not to feel, despite the revelations, that the Department of Human Resources, for example, will remain frighteningly unaffected, a bureaucratic King Kong plunging through ailing Washington, reducing misery to a rubble heap of statistics, reports and press releases, climbing the tallest budget with Polly Shackleton wriggling helplessly in its arms crying something like, "I don't feel Mr. Yeldell is doing an adequate job in view of the city's health crisis."

About the only thing that can be said in defense of Yeldell and his agency is that the public health problem that endangers the most people is not primarily a responsibility of DHR and no one is doing anything about that either. The city this year has been through eight self-afflicted semi-strangulations known euphemistically as air pollution alerts, which is a bit like saying that someone who has been yoked experienced a mugging alert.

Most of us pass through these murky, gasping periods with at worst discomfort and/or carcinogenic alterations that will not become apparent for another decade or so, but there are people who are so immediately affected by pollution that they must restrict themselves to their air-conditioned homes, astronauts viewing their own planet from the safety of dust-decontaminated, air-filtered modern colonial, two-oven space capsules.

There is a certain essential quality to breathing that would, you might think, lead us to place a higher socio-political value upon it. If I get assaulted on 34th Street I can at least call the police. If I get emphysema on 34th Street, may I take action against my attackers: the city government that has sent gangs of roving adults to commit gaseous mayhem in my neighborhood? Of course not. The law covers random, occasional, brief and external assaults, not the premeditated, long-term, cumulative and city-budgeted ones.

The drafters of the Constitution protected free speech but they forgot to add that there "shall be no law abridging free fresh air." But while we're waiting for such an amendment, maybe the best thing we can do is to pressure the city to close the whole damn place down when you can't breathe in it anymore. A few inches of snow on the ground does it, why shouldn't tons of poison in the air? Send the government workers home. Close the bridges and parking lots. Put it in union contracts: paid holidays when the index hits the trouble range. I can hear them down at the District Building. We do not believe this concept is economically feasible given the. . .

So let's move on to more manageable

alarms. Like Charles Walker, lately the city treasurer, who is being pressed to explain certain discrepancies between his autobiography, as stated in various personnel and medical files, and reality. Mr. Walker has resigned, the authorities are looking into his affairs, but the most interesting question remains unanswered: why was he hired in the first case? Whose friend was he? I had always assumed that the city treasurer position was one of some responsibility, but in retrospect maybe I was wrong. Given the fiscal largesse of the DC government, perhaps it doesn't matter who signs the checks as long as they keep going out.

Now let's see. What else is there? Oh yes, a few people dead in fires that seem to be more than coincidentally related to the closing of fire stations by a city government that ranks convention centers ahead of pumper trucks. Some misused cars in DHR. Some unused ambulances specifically designated for maternity cases, another brainchild of DHR. The testimony of criminal consultant Arnold Pontesso, 29 years with the federal prison system, to the effect that Lorton "represents a state of decay and lack of maintenance that I have never witnessed in the United States before. . . I don't think it is fit for human habitation." Medicaid coverage in doubt for 35,000 "medically needy" persons, food stamp outlets being closed. College board scores that put DC public school graduates next to the bottom among big city schools. Metro problems too numerous to mention.

Keep your fingers crossed. Let one more tow truck operator get bitten and there may be a serious move to cancel home rule. Theoretically, competency should not be a prerequisite for freedom, but it certainly makes the argument easier to press.

THE recent election got the turnout it deserved. The award for extraneous and irrelevant issues goes to Ward Two, where John Wilson, a salty and useful member of the Council, and Leroy Washington, a justifiably little known opponent, scrapped in a delightfully undignified manner. Wilson roundly defeated Washington despite efforts of a group called Citizens United for Progress. I received an invitation from CUP for a testimonial dinner at \$12.50 a head. Not having heard of CUP, I checked the back of the invitation and found a list of 20 members including Edward Hailes, president, William Lucy, Calvin Rolark and LeRoy Washington. Twelve persons were due to be honored at the dinner. They included: Edward Hailes, Wilhelmina Rolark (Calvin's wife), William Lucy and LeRoy Washington. I am not yet certain what sort of progress CUP wants, but they seem to be quite united.

Wilhelmina Rolark, one of the honorees, defeated Jim Coates in Ward Eight. I was sorry to see Coates go, not because he was so outstanding, but because he voted right (when he showed up) and after a rather poor term on the school board seemed to be improving with age, a rarity among his colleagues. But Ms. Rolark is an able and good person, too, and a little fresh blood on the council shouldn't hurt.

The most disturbing aspect of the election was the sizable sums that candidates like Barry, Wilson and Dixon raised despite weak opposition. This didn't seem right when Sterling Tucker did it and it doesn't seem any righter when our friends do it. There was simply too much money changing hands in this primary for anybody's good.

- SAM SMITH

POSTSCRIPT: As this issue was going to press the mayor shifted the pay-raise problem from a disappearing item to the change-the-due-date category. He found two more taxes he could collect earlier, giving him a one-time gain of \$26 million. If this trend continues we shall be asked to pay our property taxes one year in advance and switch to an 11-month fiscal year. WW will insist he doesn't want more money from us -- just faster.

Classifieds

CLASSIFIED ADS: 10¢ a word. Payment must be enclosed with ad. Deadline: Third Tuesday of the month. Send to DC Gazette, 1739 Conn. Ave. NW (#2) DC 20009

THE GOODFELLOW REVIEW OF CRAFTS. \$6 for 12 issues. Write for free copy. Box 4520, Berkeley, Calif. 94704 JA

POTTERY STUDIO open house. Stoneware & porcelain. Planters, functional items. Oct. 16-17 12-6pm. Takoma Arts Pottery, 517 Cedar St. NW. 882-2910

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POTTERY CLASSES. For information call Takoma Arts Pottery, 882-2910, 882-3424.

PUBLIC NOTICES

THE Continental Walk for Disarmament and Social Justice, which has been trekking across the country

trying to get people interested in issues other than Jimmy Carter's faith and Susan Ford's hypothetical affairs, arrives in DC on October 15. For info call the Washington Peace Center at 234-2000.

QUAKER BAZAAR at meetinghouse 2111 Fla. Ave. NW, Sat. Oct. 9 10-4. Auction, food sale, gift sale, white elephant tables. Special emphasis on book bargains. Food and refreshments in Bazaar Cafe.

THE Alliance for Neighborhood Government holds its fourth national conference in New York on October 15 and 16. For information contact the ANG at 202-234-9382.

THE 3rd revised Assassination Conspiracy Resource List is not available from Donnelly/Colt, Box 271, New Vernon, NJ 07976.

A NEW bilingual paperback with 550 drawings and photos, "450 Years of Chicano History in Pictures," is now available for \$5.50 (including postage) from the Chicano Communication Center, PO Box 6086, Albuquerque NW 87107.

STRONGFORCE (2121 Decatur Place NW 20008, 234-6883) has published a useful guide on food buying clubs -- how to organize them, how they work, the history of food politics in DC and the national food scene. It's free to groups organizing buying clubs.

HOME Care services for the Handicapped, a non-profit respite care service for suburban Maryland and Washington, DC, is recruiting volunteers to be "sitters" for handicapped children and adults on a short-term, temporary basis in their own or in the handicapped person's home. There is

also a special need for day care mothers and foster parents who can provide care in their own homes. Info: 949-8153.

THE Friendship House Clothing Bank wants used, wearable clothing and shoes for children and adults. Drop them by at 520 8th Street, SE or call Jim Beale, 547-8880, to arrange for pick-up of the clothes.

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McLEAN GARDENS NEWS

MCLEAN GARDENS RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION: AN EDITORIAL

Recently the Municipal Planning Office for the District decided to hold a Ward III meeting of the ANCs for the purpose of developing a "Draft Land Use Category Map." Evidently, Ward III is the only part of the city undergoing this process. Perhaps the reason behind the privilege lies in the intense pressure for development in our area of the city. But no one really knows for sure. In fact, no one seems to know much about just what this latest phase in planning is really all about: what is involved, how far it will go, and in the end, what it will mean.

Almost one year ago, seven citizen groups in and around McLean Gardens requested the Municipal Planning Office to institute a Sectional Development Plan for the area. This formal process would result in both recommendations for specific zoning changes and a plan for future growth and development. Although the seven groups made their request in November, it was four full months before the MPO responded -- and the SDP was denied.

In a second attempt to get the city to effect planning, a resolution was introduced in the City Council calling on the Mayor to initiate the SDP. The resolution was passed unanimously last July, but now, this, too, has met with prolonged silence from the Executive Branch.

The issue of development is neither new to the city nor unique to our area. But perhaps we are distinguished by the intensity of development pressures. The catalogue includes: 1) an embassy-chancery-office complex, 40% the size of Rosslyn, to replace McLean Gardens; 2) construction of a 184 bed Group Health hospital on the site of Johnson's Florists; 3) proposed or potential development of two historic tracts of land -- Rosedale and Tregaron, which together amount to some 20 acres of land in residential neighborhoods; 4) reconstruction of a consolidated postal facility at Wisconsin and Upton, combining the services of Friendship, Cleveland Park, and Georgetown and including a large carrier station; 5) and of course, several Metro stops in or abounding the area. What's more, construction has already begun on projects not enumerated -- all impacting just one small segment of Ward III.

The demand quickly becomes one of planning before development. At the MPO meeting each of the ANCs itemized their own development hot spots. The litany was dizzying. Some of these conflicts have been around for years. Few have been resolved, and fewer still have been resolved favorably for the citizens and their neighborhoods. More and more proposals are presented each year. There is only so much room for development. And there comes a time when planning must no longer be put off. We don't want fancy maps, ideal sounding draft statements, or profiles. We want planning. Now. Before development.

Far SE Pennsylvania Ave. Corridor Notes

By James Hannaham Commissioner, ANC 7B

The Penn Branch Community located in the heart of ANC 7B, along with one other District and ten suburban communities, were selected by a Washington Star (June 13, 1976) Crime Survey as the Washington Metropolitan Areas Safest Neighborhoods. This is no surprise. A sense of community prevails in the ANC 7B-Penn Branch area. A fascinating racially mixed community, ANC 7B is indeed fortunate to have so many active local civic organizations and citizens who care about each other and who have a deep pride in their neighborhood. The following lists just a few of the many individuals who deserve to be commended for their moonlighting exploits on behalf of the total ANC 7B Community: Harry Kapland, the tireless triple treat, as President of S.E. Neighbors, Naylor Dupont Community Coalition and the Penn Branch Citizens Association. Ann and Len Carey, newcomers to the community. Len for his magnificent work in preparation of the SEN BZA hearings on Fairfax Village Park and Ann for her expert testimony to the City Council on the Soil Erosion Legislation. Vincent M. Spaulding for his never say die spirit as chairman of the Far S.E. Task Force for Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Legislation. Frank Anderson for his adroit steersmanship of the group effort on by-laws for the Anacostia CD-2. Martha and Bob Tompkins, she for the hard work with the Pa. Ave. Beautification effort and he for covering for the total ANC 7B community on public utility rate issues at PSC among other things that had to be done quickly and well. Mary and Phil Hammond for their all out effort in Beautification. Dennis Copeland for his brilliant presentation for ANC 7B on the Pa. Ave. S.E. Traffic hearings. David Shaw for his tenacity in fighting for neighborhood causes through the D.C. Census Statistical Area Committee. The Meals on Wheels Bunch i.e., Maryland Kemp, David Shaw, Barbara Hogan, Ludwig Sites and Charles Laycock. William Blount and Trustees of the Community Assembly. ANC 7B Commissioners for their efforts on behalf of the community. Best Wishes for a speedy recovery to Commissioner Riddick Free.

flotsam & jetsam

IT WAS NICE to learn the other day that the National Labor Relations Board agrees with me that journalists are not "professionals." The ruling came in a labor dispute over which union reporters and other newspaper workers should join. The NLRB probably didn't mean to, but it nonetheless struck a small blow for freedom of the press -- and the rest of the country as well. One of the most serious of the infinite misapprehensions suffered by reporters is that they are somehow akin to lawyers, doctors and engineers. They long for initial letters after their name.

I read recently that as late as the 1950s more than half of all reporters lacked a college degree. Since that time there has been increasing emphasis on professionalism in journalism; witness the growth of journalism schools, the proliferation of turgid articles on the subject, and the preoccupation with "objectivity" and other "ethical issues." There has also been an interesting parallel growth in monopolization of the press. As choice becomes limited, the market place loses its corrective function and regulation becomes a paramount problem. Thus we find Esther Peterson for Giant Food and Charles Sieb for the Post performing essentially the same task: to mitigate our worry that we don't really have much choice anymore, to reassure us that despite the fact that Joe Danzansky and Katherine Graham have inordinate power to limit our decisions, it's really all right.

Considering reporters as professionals fits right in. Among the common characteristics of professions is that they are closed shops and have strong monopolistic tendencies. The more training required to enter a field, the more you can weed out socially, politically and philosophically unsuitable candidates; and armed with a set of rules politely known as canons or codes of ethics but also operating as an agreement for the restraint of trade, one can eliminate much of the competition.

The professional aspirations of such formerly unpretentious occupations as journalism, teaching and politics is one of the most dangerous of the numerous anti-democratic currents of the day. Professionals hoard knowledge and use it as a form of monopolistic capital. For example, one of the most constructive ways to improve health in the country is through preventive action and personal habits, which depend upon widespread information and education. Yet it has been largely through governmental intervention (the FDA, EPA etc.), renegade doctors so few they are household words, investigating legislators, health nuts and consumer groups that the country is beginning to understand that health is not something that you buy from a doctor. The medical profession has regarded this as a trade secret.

Lawyers have been more successful in withstanding the democratic spirit. The fact that there are ways of dealing with civil disputes and community justice other than in the traditional legal adversary system is still not

widely known. Through semantic obfuscation, a stranglehold over our courts and legislatures, and an arcane collection of self-serving contradictions known as law, attorneys have managed to turn human disputation from a mere cottage industry into a significant factor in the gross national product.

Reporters were supposed to be different. They were once considered little more than the surrogate eyes and ears of ordinary persons. They were not expected to be experts or guardians of highly technical or exotic truths and they certainly did not merit priestly status, for a democracy, if it wishes to remain one, must deny priesthood to those like the press and politicians who are meant to be the instruments of the people rather than the other way around.

How far we have come from this simple democratic principle is demonstrated in politics by the still very imperial presidency and the compulsive demand for ethical purity on the part of officeholders, a demand that goes far beyond noncorrupt practices towards a set of standards whose main function is to limit, a la admission to the bar, who can run for office and who can't. One of the most useful statements made during the current campaign came in a letter from one of Eugene McCarthy's campaign managers to that American Medical Association of politics, Common Cause. Common Cause had asked all the presidential candidates to subscribe to a set of unctious campaign standards. Most happily agreed. But the McCarthy people raised the fundamental question: who was Common Cause to set standards for running for office? Shove your standards in your ear, John Gardner was correctly advised.

The point of a democracy is not to prohibit crooks or demagogues from running for public office, but to defeat them. Similarly, the First Amendment says nothing about objectivity, professional standards, national news councils, blind quotes, deep backgrounds, or how much publicity to give a trial. Its authors understood far better than many contemporary editors and journalistic commentators that the pursuit of truth can not be codified and that circumscribing the nature of the search will limit the potential of its success. Nor can there be an institutionalization of the search for the truth; it always comes back to the will and ability of individuals. Despite the Post's brazen capitalizing on the triumph of reporters Woodward and Bernstein, it is still the case that the mighty institution on 15th Street would have failed without the doggedness, wisdom and talent of those two reporters -- as, indeed, the Post and the vast majority of the corporate media did fail to uncover the truth about Nixon and Vietnam in all the years before Watergate.

That's a part of what a craft is about. Check a reporter's bookshelf and you'll find a dictionary, Bartlett's, a thesaurus and, perhaps, Strunk & White and lots of junk reading. No stacks of maroon or blue texts with thin gold titles like "Compton on Trial Coverage." Doctors need such tomes; lawyers have made it necessary to themselves to have them. But journalism does not depend upon the retrieval of institutionalized stores of knowledge, and won't -- until we presume to know as much, as definitively, about the working of human society as a doctor

must know about the workings of the stomach.

Journalistic writing has always been a craft -- in rare moments an art, but never a profession. It depends too much on the perception, skill, empathy and honesty of the practitioner rather than on the acquisition of technical knowledge and skills. The techniques of reporting can be much more easily taught than such human qualities and they can be best learned in an apprentice-like situation rather than in a classroom.

Too many reporters have nothing but technique. Trained not to take sides, to be "balanced," they lose the human passion that makes up the better part of the world about which they write. They are taught to surrender values such as commitment, anger and delight that make the world go round and thus become peculiarly unqualified to describe the rotation. Disengaged, their writing is not fair but just vacuously neutral on the surface while culturally biased underneath.

That's why the Gazette has welcomed "non-professional" writers -- writers who knew something other than journalism, who cared about something else. On the average they make the better writer. They have something to say.

With the press heady over its rising social and political status and the basking in the post-Watergate journalistic mythology, it is more important than ever to remember that the quality of journalism depends upon the individual practice and not upon an institutionalized system. All memory of the newspaper trade short of printing could be wiped out and in a matter of days someone would start publishing a newspaper again, and probably a good one. Someone would want to tell a story.

The institution of journalism functions like all large institutions, it is greedy, self-promoting, and is driven towards the acquisition of power. The thing that has saved it has been the integrity and craft of individual journalists. Preserving that integrity and that craft is not only important to reporters but to everyone, for when reporters become merely agents of an over-powerful profession, democracy loses one of its most important allies, free journalists practicing their craft.

— SAM SMITH

